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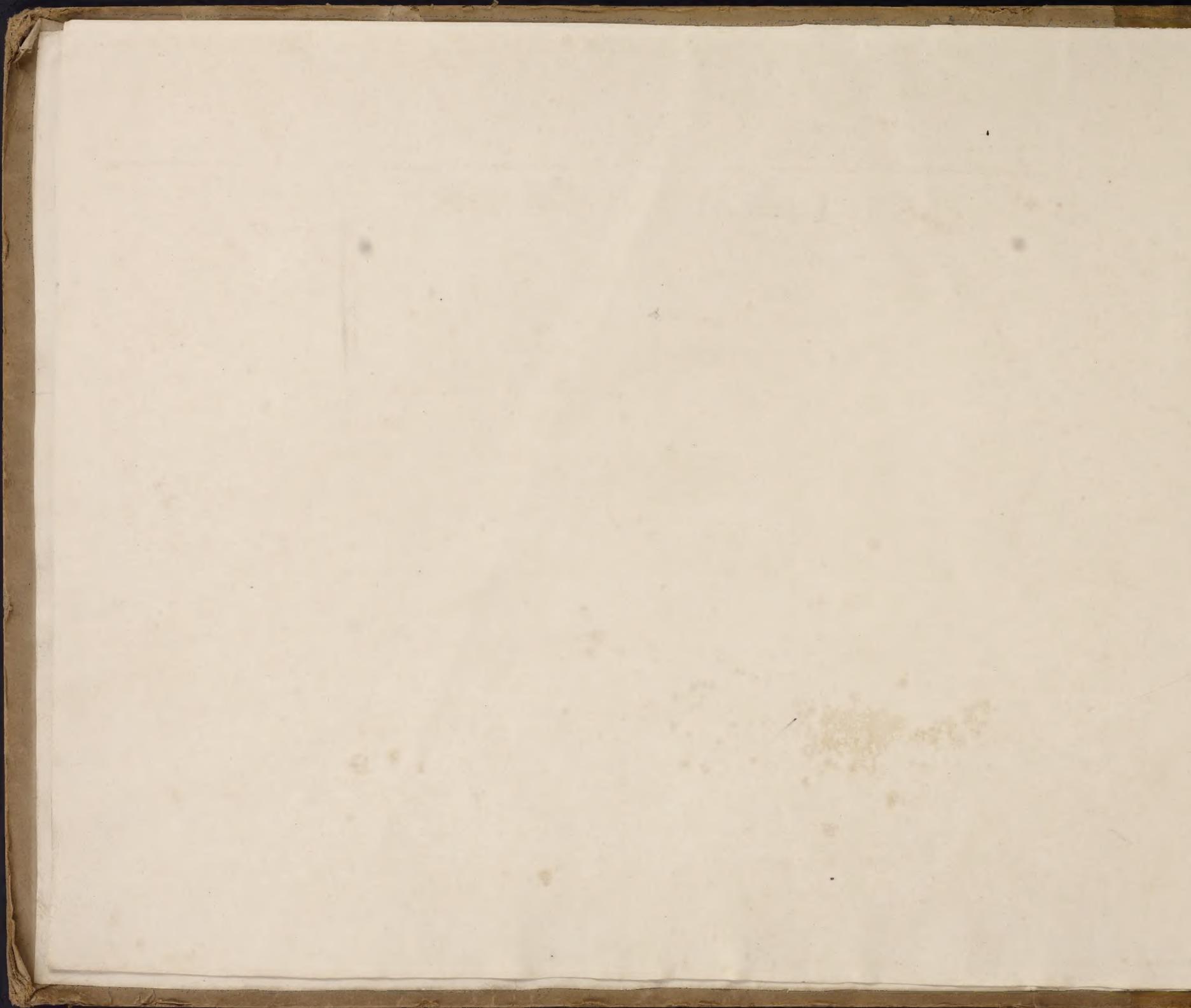
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BY RICHARD LAWRENCE.

“Talisque apparuit illi,
Qualis ubi oppositas nitidissima Solis imago
Evicit nubes, nullaque obstante reluxit.” OVID.

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TO THE READER.

IN presenting the following work to the tribunal of public taste, the Author is not insensible of the critical situation in which he stands.

Encouraged, however, by the hope of indulgence towards its defects, he ventures to proceed by stating the principles on which he has acted in the execution of this arduous undertaking.

The professed object of government in purchasing this admirable collection of Grecian sculpture, being for the improvement and exaltation of the British school of art, it became a matter of the first importance, that a just and radical knowledge of the peculiar character and style of these matchless productions should be disseminated, not only amongst artists, but also amongst those members of society, who, by their rank, wealth and education, are more especially qualified to exercise the interesting functions of impartial censors and benevolent patrons. With the view therefore of assisting in the promotion of so desirable an object, the Author of the following essay, after an uninterrupted series of three years close contemplation and study of these beautiful relics, and at the solicitation of several of his friends, has presumed to publish the product of his labours.

Convinced that this object would be best promoted, by confining his observations chiefly to the character and execution of the different specimens in the above collection, and professing neither skill nor practice in antiquarian research, he has abstained from offering any speculative opinions of his own on the allegorical personifications of the different groups and figures, considering such an enquiry as calculated rather to amuse the antiquary than to serve the interests of art; as in fact the mere antiquity of a piece of sculpture can neither increase nor diminish the original excellence of its composition; for, the Elgin Marbles would have stood as pre-eminent and unrivalled in truth and perfection had they been executed but yesterday, as they now do after the awful lapse of two thousand years. It is not intended, however, by the foregoing remarks to underrate the utility of antiquarian pursuits, as doubtless much valuable information has been thereby obtained; but it is that too prevailing practice of estimating works of art by their antiquity against which the Author takes the liberty to protest; a practice which can have no other effect than that of paralysing the efforts of British genius, and infusing into the public mind a contemptuous indifference towards the productions of modern times.

That a laudable inclination to encourage modern art prevails amongst the great in this country, is amply proved by the liberal institutions already established for that purpose, and any failure in accomplishing, to the fullest extent, the patriotic and benevolent object which they have in view, ought to be attributed rather to that fallibility from which no human plans are exempt, than to any deficiency of zeal and generosity on the part of the noble founders.

If any difference of opinion exists among artists, in regard to the course that has been pursued for carrying those beneficent views into effect, it neither becomes the dignity of the

profession, nor is it consonant with the established courtesy of refined society, to express that dissent in harsh and ungracious terms.

It is the interest of art to propitiate the gentler feelings of the mind by mild suggestion and temperate representation, not to disgust and alienate by the impertinence of dictation, or the rancour of malevolence.

That prejudices exist in all matters of taste cannot be denied, but it is no part of the pursuit of truth and science to flatter prejudices, however ancient their origin, or exalted their station. The human mind, in its perpetual search of novelty, but too often forsakes the plain and beaten path of nature; disregarding truths the most obvious for the mistaken gratification of wandering in the labyrinths of doubt and obscurity. Thus it is with art, and hence has arisen that pedantic jargon of terms and rules adopted by those who, under the garb of scientific profundity, attempt to conceal ignorance and inability, by throwing the veil of mystery over principles which are naturally as clear and perceptible as the sun at noon-day. Hence also that unaccountable preference which is sometimes bestowed on works that have no other claim to attention, than the incongruity of their conception and the extravagance of their execution. Extravagance in design must ever be a violation of nature, and will produce that singularity of style which, in the language of art, is termed *manner*. But it is the peculiar excellence of these matchless relics, that they are so chaste and so faithful to nature, that it needs but the Promethean fire to bring them into life and motion; and so wholly devoid are they of *manner*, that at a first view they fail to strike the eye with that wonder, which is generally excited by surveying works of an overcharged description; and some

connoisseurs who are accustomed to regulate their opinions of art by the gusto of some favourite master, are, at their first introduction to this admirable collection, puzzled in no small degree whether to admire or condemn. Truth, however, ultimately prevails. Each repeated inspection unfolds new beauties, confirms the superiority of these transcendent master-pieces of art, and justifies their being held up as the standard of excellence and the touchstone of taste.

It is a curious coincidence that Sir Joshua Reynolds seems to have manifested the same doubt and insensibility, on his first viewing the works of the immortal Raffaelle in the Vatican. He expresses himself upon that occasion in the following words, "Though disappointed, in justice to myself I did not for a moment suppose that the works of Raffaelle, and those admirable paintings in particular, owed their reputation to the ignorance and prejudice of mankind; on the contrary, my not relishing them was one of the most humiliating circumstances that ever happened to me. I found myself in the midst of works executed upon principles with which I was unacquainted; I felt my ignorance, and stood abashed. All the indigested notions of painting which I had brought with me from England, where the art was at its lowest ebb, were to be totally done away and eradicated from my mind. It was necessary, as is expressed on a more solemn occasion, that I should become as a little child. Notwithstanding my disappointment, I proceeded to copy some of those admirable works. I viewed them again and again. I even affected to feel their merit more than I really did. In a short time a new taste and new perceptions began to dawn upon me, and I was convinced that I had originally formed a false opinion of the perfection of art, and that this great painter was well entitled to the high rank which he holds in the estimation of the world.

The truth is, that if these works had really been what I expected, they would have contained beauties superficial and alluring, but by no means such as would have entitled them to the great reputation which they have so long and so justly attained."

The foregoing candid confession of Sir Joshua Reynolds bears a strong analogy to the present subject; for it is a fact, that not only connoisseurs, but even modern artists of considerable celebrity, have viewed the specimens of sculpture in the Elgin collection with the same indifference, and in some instances without the same eventual conviction.*

In the arrangement and execution of the Plates with which this work is embellished, the Author has adopted the plan of giving duplicate designs of those specimens that are mutilated; conceiving that it would not be unacceptable to the majority of his readers. But he has not ventured to make restorations except in those instances where some trace was perceptible of the original situation and course of the dilapidated part.

The great expense of engraving, and the desire to render the price of the publication as moderate as possible, induced him to confine the drawings to outlines only; and he hopes that

* It is not a little remarkable, however, that Sir Joshua should have made such an observation as the following, when speaking of the works of Raffaelle, without being sensible of its self-application. For he says, "had they really been what I expected, they would have contained *beauties superficial and alluring*, but by no means such as would have entitled them to the great reputation which they have so long and so justly acquired."

That his own style was both superficial and alluring, cannot be disputed. Being deficient in drawing, he painted for a general and distant effect. Hence the markings of the nostrils, mouth and fingers, were all effected by a dash of colour only.

This system, managed in the masterly way in which he practised it, gave a seductive splendour and a deceptive freedom to his works, but was very ill adapted for the grand, defined, and severe character, that is so essential in producing force and dignity.

the work, notwithstanding its limited scale, will not be deemed unworthy of being the humble harbinger to the more splendid and elaborate editions that may hereafter be published by the British Museum.

Doomed, as a practitioner of the Veterinary Art, to pursue an avocation but little calculated to exercise the nobler faculties of the human mind, the meridian of life had passed away, ere these precious remains of antiquity first gratified his eye, and confirmed the total alienation of his thoughts from every other pursuit. Hence little remains to him but unavailing regret, that his ability to profit by these admirable examples is abridged by circumstances over which there is no control.

INTRODUCTION.

PURSUITS which tend to exalt the mind and to exercise its functions beyond those operations that are simply necessary to corporeal existence, have in all ages been cherished by the wise, the good, and the great.

That the human mind is endowed with faculties for the cultivation of such pursuits, is abundantly manifest; the various degrees of excellence attained at different periods have, of course, been dependant on coeval circumstances, propitious or adverse according to the elevated or debased condition of society. Such endowments afford a strong presage of the immortality of the soul, and by conducting our researches beyond the precincts of the material world, they render this life as estimable as the imperfection of our nature will admit.

Amongst those attainments which contribute to the purer blandishments of life, the imitative art of design may justly claim precedence; for it leads to the contemplation of the sublime and beautiful tablet of nature, and opens to our comprehension those sources of innocent delight, which a state of mere animal existence would never supply. Hence may truly be said of art, what Cicero

says of science, “ studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant; secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium an solatim præbent; delectant domis, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur.”

The most rude and savage tribes have constantly indicated a disposition to produce imitations of objects around them; their incapability of attaining any excellence may naturally be attributed to their uncultivated condition in all other respects. Still the Egyptian school, barbarous as it was, paved the way for the production of those works of art, which at this day excite the admiration and applause of the civilized world.

The introduction to this country of those admirable specimens of Grecian sculpture, the transcendent beauty of which seems to have tempted even Time to suspend his ruthless hand, has opened treasures to the school of art, to which until that period she had been a stranger.

A few travellers, it is true, had visited these monuments of taste and skill, and had given some description of their arrangement, but it may be fairly asserted that none have transmitted to us any adequate idea of the peculiar character and excellence, which distinguish them from all others that have yet been discovered. The delight and admiration, with which these relics were first viewed by some of the most eminent artists of this country, particularly by the venerable president of the Royal Academy, furnish the strongest proofs of the value of such an acquisition, as well as the best defence against certain hypercritical and affected lamentations on the violation of the unity of art and place; lamentations well suited to the airy precincts of a poet's brain, but perfectly ridiculous when analysed by the test of experience and real circumstances. To those who have a just conception of the inestimable beauties of this collection, it can scarcely be necessary to offer any arguments in

vindication of their removal from those degraded regions, where they might be truly said " to waste their sweetness in the desert air."

Unrivalled either in ancient or modern times, and coeval with those great philosophers and poets whose admirable works have stood the test of ages, they present evidence incontrovertible that the records which have been handed down of Athenian greatness were neither false in substance nor exaggerated in the detail. Who, indeed, can survey these matchless specimens of human talent without being lost in admiration, mingled with that sublime emotion which must naturally arise on reflecting that two thousand years have passed away since they were conceived in the mind and fashioned by the hand?

Here may the pride and self sufficiency of modern times bow to the silent but impressive admonition, that the great original plan of nature has prescribed limits to terrestrial grandeur, that the most exalted states have perished by the inevitable process of self decay, and that our present boasted attainments are but feeble coruscations of light succeeding a long and humiliating eclipse of the human understanding.

This melancholy lesson, however, whilst it mortifies our vanity, should not depress that reasonable ambition which is the necessary stimulus to exertion, nor should the consciousness of inability to equal the works of our predecessors, deter us from endeavouring to excel those of our cotemporaries. But the basis of improvement in the present state of art in this country must depend on a corresponding improvement in the public taste; and it is by the constant contemplation and study of those works only which are truly excellent that the judgment can acquire sound principles for its government and direction. How unreasonable would be the idea, that a clown

should either feel or imitate the accomplishments of polished life, without previous and long intercourse with those whose manners he was to attain. Yet precisely in this situation do the majority of mankind stand in regard to a just taste and conception of works of art. In this country, although it can boast of no national or public collection of paintings by ancient masters, there is perhaps a greater number of the finest specimens of their works in the possession of various noblemen and gentlemen, than in any other part of Europe whatever. It is by referring to those valuable productions of the pencil that the patrons of modern art are accustomed to regulate their taste and judgment, and if they were left uninfluenced by officious, ignorant, and interested advisers, there would be fewer occasions to lament those fatal prejudices and prepossessions which sometimes cloud the brightest understandings, and prevent the progress of truth and knowledge. That many of the ancient productions, especially those of the divine Raffaelle, are proper models of truth and excellence, must be acknowledged by every one who possesses a just feeling for the chaste and the sublime. But there are also other productions, such as those of Rembrandt and the rest of the Dutch and Flemish schools, which, so far from contributing to the refinement and improvement of taste, tend but to corrupt and debase it. The works of this school have no other recommendation than what arises from the admirable manner in which they are coloured; the conception and design being generally erroneous and vulgar in the extreme. Colouring, however, is but the decorative part of a picture, and requires no other feeling than what arises from a just comprehension of the effect of light and shade, and the harmony of colours.

The eye of the spectator is captivated by a judicious arrangement and brilliancy of tone, and is thereby beguiled from scrutinising the vulgarity of the composition, and as it is well known that

even the extreme of ugliness and deformity becomes less disgusting by familiarity, so is it with works of art of the above description, and hence that vitiation of taste and feeling which is so much and so often to be deplored. The works of the Dutch and Flemish schools are, however, the most numerous, and hence it becomes the interest of those traders in old pictures who infest and obstruct the avenues to modern art, to hold them up as models of perfection on the one hand, and to decry all modern productions on the other.

From causes like these it arises that there is but a certain extent in art to which the judgment of the majority of spectators is capable of reaching, and, on this account, all efforts on the part of the artist to go beyond that particular point, are rendered fruitless by the want of sufficient knowledge and true taste in the public, (except in some few instances) to estimate his merit and to distinguish his superiority. It is moreover this want of judgment on the part of the public which has occasioned that lamentable increase in the number of those young men who are consigned, whether qualified or not, to the pursuit of art. Every idle boy who can scrawl a few lines with a pencil is considered a *genius*, and his mistaken parents and friends, instead of devoting him to some useful employment, encourage him in a pursuit which can lead to nothing but poverty and disappointment.*

The career of these victims to a foolish misconception of their own talents, is generally attended with a total neglect of literary education, and, shut out by this deficiency and their native obscurity from intercourse with the higher classes of society, their minds must, of necessity, be little else than

* It would be well if the parents of these boys would attend in this case to Ovid's observation on the pursuit of poetry,

"Sæpe pater dixit, studium quid inutile tentas?"

a barren waste calculated neither for self-improvement nor for public elucidation. Yet this is the stock from whence historical painters and sculptors are expected to arise. The hand and the eye, it is true, may acquire both facility and fidelity in copying the works of nature, but conception, disposition, and expression depend on the mind alone. These constitute the groundwork of historical painting, and can never be supplied by colouring however beautiful and seductive, nor are they to be acquired without classical erudition polished by a constant intercourse with refined society.

The tinsel and glare of gaudy colouring, and extravagance and affectation in design, may captivate the vulgar and please the uninformed, but dignity and simplicity should be considered as the only true basis of excellence. These indispensable qualities, however, in works of art, will neither be cultivated by artists, nor duly appreciated by the public, until the general taste of the country is improved and exalted. We now fortunately possess, in the Elgin collection, models peculiarly adapted for that purpose, and it requires nothing but ocular inspection to ingraft a true feeling of their excellence in the public mind, and there can be no doubt that lectures upon them, accompanied with critical demonstration, would contribute more than any thing else to accomplish so desirable an object.

There is but one standard which should govern all the productions of the human mind, namely, an inseparable union between truth and taste. This was the beacon that directed those great philosophers, poets and artists in their course through the untried paths of early science, and protected them from the snares of fallacy and absurdity.

Truth, as it applies to art, must be founded upon nature alone. Whenever the artist takes

the liberty of departing from nature, and creates for himself, where are the bounds to the caprice and extravagance of his imagination? These aberrations from nature are, however, considered by certain *cognoscenti* as justifiable on the principle of their constituting what is termed the *beau ideal*, but this *beau ideal*, although a very fashionable term in modern art, is not easily to be comprehended. It is to be presumed that, in its literal acceptation, it is intended to signify ideal beauty, and that it originated in the notion of improving nature. That one man may possess more exalted ideas of what is beautiful than another cannot be denied, and that a man so endowed will make a better selection from the works of nature than another not so qualified, is also very probable; but, the advocates of the *beau ideal*, not content to stop there, maintain that something *superior* to nature may be conceived in the mind of the artist and from thence transmitted to the canvass or the marble. That such an opinion has long prevailed is sufficiently evident in the composition of many of the ancient as well as modern productions. The celebrated Apollo Belvidere may be selected as a fair illustration. This figure exhibits great dignity in the attitude, and a fine and exalted expression in the countenance, but, independently of those circumstances, it has but little to recommend it. The rigid and stony character of the body and of the thighs, arising from a want of those delicate undulations and inflexions of the surface which are necessary to give the appearance of life and motion, renders the detail of that interesting figure greatly deficient in truth and nature. This departure from the principles of nature has been attempted to be justified on the plea that, as the figure was intended to represent a God, it was not only unnecessary but also inconsistent to adhere strictly to the particularities of humanity. But if the artist thought proper to imbody his Deity with the form and attributes of man, where is the pretence for neglecting to preserve the semblance in all

those points which are the instruments of life and motion? For of what use are limbs without joints and muscles for their flexion and extension? and surely it would not have derogated from the expression and dignity of the figure in question, to have executed the detail of it with anatomical fidelity. Nor must it have been a necessary consequence, that a more strict and definite observance of the anatomy of the component parts would have destroyed the elegance and celestial character of the whole.

Some of the Lapithæ in the Elgin collection exhibit the highest degree of elegance and perfection in their contour, yet display a complete attention to anatomy and physiology in all their component parts, and furnish a most incontestable proof that the combination of anatomical truth with beauty neither weakens expression nor destroys character.

Whether this neglect of anatomical fidelity in the composition of the Apollo arose from ignorance or intention it is not possible to ascertain; but it is certain that most artists find it less difficult to design from their own ideas than to copy *perfect* nature.

It is true that perfection in the human form is seldom or perhaps never met with in one individual. Hence artists have very properly deemed it expedient to select beautiful parts from several subjects and to combine them in one whole. But a figure so compounded cannot be called *ideal*, nor does it prove that the mind of the artist can conceive any thing superior in beauty to any of those individual parts which were thus selected. The chief cause of these partial imperfections in the human figure, especially among the lower orders from whence models are generally chosen, arises from an unequal exercise of the various parts of the body. Thus the arms of blacksmiths, from the nature of their employment, become disproportionately large when compared

with their legs, and the same disproportion occurs in the legs of chairmen when compared with their arms. In models of this class there is an unremitting rigidity and contraction of muscle, arising from hard labour, which destroys the appearance both of grace and elasticity.

The best models are to be found among the higher ranks of society, whose bodies experience just sufficient exercise to preserve health and manly vigour, and whose muscles consequently shew none of those harsh and abrupt intersections before mentioned. This extreme rigidity of muscular fibre is remarkably perceptible in the arms of blacksmiths, watermen and canal diggers, where the tendon of the biceps muscle becomes so stretched by violent and constant exertion that the muscle shortens itself to such a degree as to ascend half-way up the arm, assuming the form of a ball, and giving the lower part of the humerus, just above the elbow, a poverty of appearance and an unnatural want of substance.

If it be necessary to adduce any further argument to expose the nonsense and absurdity of the *beau ideal*, the following extract from a modern critique on Dupper's life of Raffaelle, will furnish a pretty ample specimen.

The critic observes, " Notwithstanding the opinion of so great a judge (alluding to Algarotti) Raffaelle was not exempt from faults, and the greatest of all seems his want of *ideal beauty*. It is true he copied nature wherever he could find her, but he copied her *as she was*. Hence he is inimitable in painting men, but he is not so exquisite in painting women and angels. We allow, (continues the critic) that the heads of his Madonne are beautiful, *inimitably so*, but that is the effect of beauty in the expression, and not beauty in the abstract. The fact is, Raffaelle altered nature for the better in regard to expression, but left her as she was in regard to beauty, occasionally we

might find objects in reality more beautiful. Consequently he gave to his figures a very pleasing expression, but he represented them as human persons. His Christ is a man compared with the Jupiter or the Apollo in the Vatican."

The above is the opinion of one of our modern critics respecting the *beau ideal* in art, and may be fairly taken as the general sentiment of all the admirers of that incomprehensible hypothesis. The absurdities and contradictions contained in it are too ridiculous for serious consideration, and were it not that they constitute the basis of that chimerical standard of excellence by which all works of art are estimated, they would be scarcely worth the trouble of refutation.

The first objection "that he copied nature wherever he could find her, but that he copied her *as she was*,"* and that hence, "he was inimitable in painting men, but not so exquisite in painting women and angels," is perhaps as entertaining a paradox as can be found in any book of conundrums yet published.

From this doctrine it would appear that the cause of his being so inimitable in painting *men*, (namely his close attention to nature), is to be taken as the reason why he did not excel in painting *women*, and hence it might be inferred a priori, that men and women are not of the same species.

Lovers, it is true, have long enjoyed the privilege of transforming the fair objects of their adoration into angels, but this is no reason why any artist, in his sober senses, should run into such extravagancies, especially when any married man could in a moment set him right upon that subject.

* Another modern writer, and *one of the same school*, in his remarks upon Raffaello appears to contradict this position, for he says, "that it was his (Raffaello's) prevalent maxim that objects should be represented *not as they are, but as they ought to be*." Who shall decide &c.!

The next observation of the critic's, that Raffaelle altered nature for the better in regard to expression, but left her as she was in regard to beauty, is no less entertaining than the rest. What can be meant by the first part of this observation, it is impossible to conceive, except it is to be understood, that representations of human nature can be improved by giving them an expression *which is not to be found in nature*. The latter part, that "he left her as she was in regard to beauty" is indeed true, and must be acknowledged by every admirer of art whose brain is not filled with nonsense and absurdity, to be a most fortunate circumstance. This was the true and simple source of his vast superiority, not only over his cotemporaries but also over all others of the present day; and those pretended connoisseurs who, for the sake of an imaginary importance, attempt to detract from his excellence, will ever fall into the same absurdities and contradictions as those above mentioned.

The effect of a strict attention to nature is also very perceptible in language. The following passage in Troilus and Cressida, the work of the immortal Shakespear, presents one of the finest illustrations imaginable. It is where Patroclus attempts to rouse Achilles from the inglorious state of inactivity into which he had fallen. Thus he says,

"Sweet, rouse yourself; and the weak wanton Cupid
Shall from your neck unloose his amorous fold,
And, like a dew-drop from the lion's mane,
Be shook to air."

It is worthy of observation that throughout this beautiful passage, there is not one high

sounding or inflated word. The effect, therefore, clearly arises from the happy allusion to a very simple and natural action of the animal in question.

For, what can exceed the effect of comparing the weak and wanton deity, inhabiting a warrior's breast, to a solitary drop of dew on the lion's mane, scattered by a casual shake of his mighty neck, with such instantaneous and complete dispersion, as to vanish in absorption by the circumambient air?

It will not be amiss to close this subject with the anecdote of the Countryman and his Pig, viz. a celebrated imitator of the cries of animals, at a public exhibition of his talents, drew down thunders of applause for his imitation of the squeaking of a pig. A jealous rival, however, challenged the performer to a trial of skill, and having procured a living pig, which he concealed under his cloak, he attended on the stage at the time appointed.

The first performer immediately gave his imitations, and was applauded to the skies. The latter then proceeded, and secretly pinched the animal which was under his cloak. Poor piggy, who had nothing of the *beau ideal* about him, either in his person or his voice, began to squeak in the tone natural to his forefathers; but, in spite of all his vocal exertions, was hissed off the stage; nor could the subsequent exhibition of this four footed performer, *in propria persona*, alter the verdict already given.

The foregoing observations are to be understood as applying to the representation of those objects which are seen in nature, and not to any fabulous or fictitious compositions. The ancient artists, it is true, were in the habit of representing monsters partaking both of man and beast, such as

Centaurs, Minotaurs, &c.; but these were executed as illustrations of the fictions of their poets, for instance, the combats of the Lapithæ with the Centaurs; but although in these monstrous combinations they overleaped the bounds of the creation, still, as is singularly manifest in the works of Phidias, they adhered in the detail most closely to nature, in the formation of the respective masses of the man and horse; whence it is evident that notwithstanding they considered their art as auxiliary to poetry even in her wildest flights, still they were careful not to violate truth in the formation of the component parts of the subject. Such indeed is the remarkable beauty of proportion and anatomical fidelity displayed in those which are found in the Elgin collection, that the senses are beguiled from reflecting on the extravagance of conception, which first gave birth to such heterogeneous monsters, and that object becomes beautiful and interesting, which, under the circumstances of bad proportion and defective execution, had been ridiculous and disgusting in the extreme.

There is this peculiar distinction which will ever characterise all works of art, executed by the standard of truth and nature, namely, that the longer they are scrutinized the more they will improve upon the eye, whilst in all those productions that are the offspring of that mistaken enthusiasm which spurns the simple character of nature, and assumes an ideal expression of its own creating, the spurious fabric of false principles moulders away on a brief inspection, and excites amongst men of discernment nothing but ridicule and contempt.

True genius consists in selecting the *best objects that already exist in nature*, not in creating imaginary systems for itself. Nature is simple and unaffected, and most majestic when most simple; and notwithstanding the constant attempts of vanity and self conceit, to mould her to the fleeting

opinions of the day, she still preserves her original form and character, especially in those parts of the globe that are yet unsophisticated by the frivolities and absurdities of civilized man.

This simplicity and native dignity is remarkably manifest both in the Asiatic and North American Indians, whose carriage is gracefully erect, and free from that lounging, rolling motion which characterizes the common people of Great Britain.

The perfect simplicity of form in the Grecian countenance is peculiarly striking, and it is no unreasonable hypothesis to suppose that it was the original form of the human face. It is certainly the best adapted to display every expression of the mind, because the most trifling variation of line in any of the features is sufficient for that purpose. It has however been customary to imagine that the strong character exhibited in what is termed the Roman face, is alone capable of great expression and effect. Such a face it is true carries with it great force, but it admits of little variation, is utterly incapable of expressing the softer emotions of the soul, and rarely presents that dignified serenity so peculiar to the Grecian feature.*

The extraordinary fidelity to nature which is manifested in the works of the ancient Greeks, and so powerfully exemplified in those admirable specimens in the Elgin collection, has been

* It is a remarkable circumstance, that notwithstanding the human face is confined to so small a number of parts as the eyes, nose and mouth, there are not to be found among the millions of human beings that inhabit the earth, two faces exactly alike.

This infinite variety, although the means by which it is produced are inscrutable, is absolutely necessary to prevent that confusion of persons which would otherwise take place.

The same variety may be traced in the resemblances of any popular character, whose portrait has been taken by several artists. A general likeness may be discovered in them all, although in fact no two of them exactly agree in similitude either with each other, or with the original from which they were taken.

attributed by some to the frequent opportunities afforded them of beholding the naked figure. But this circumstance alone would never have enabled them to attain such extraordinary perfection without the aid of anatomy and physiology. We are accustomed in this country to see naked horses, cows, dogs, &c., still we scarcely ever find any of those animals represented with tolerable correctness, except by those artists who make that branch of design their peculiar study. The education of a modern artist is generally confined to the study of the human figure, hence he forms his ideas of quadrupeds upon that foundation alone, and hence the constant representation of human eyes, and human expression in horses' heads, or in any other quadruped he may have occasion to introduce.

Some of our modern commentators on works of art have bestowed great praise on the representations of quadrupeds by Rubens, and have held them up as models for imitation. But surely his lions' heads cannot be beheld without smiling by any man who has ever seen that animal alive. Human eyes and expression, together with a curled mane, in as regular buckle as a Judge's well dressed wig, are substituted for the straight and shaggy masses of hair, and that savage dignity which are the peculiar characteristics of that noble sovereign of the forest. The style in which they are executed is bold and vigorous, but it certainly would not have rendered it less so to have adhered more strictly to truth and nature.* These extravagancies in works of

* It is, however, but justice to state, that at least one exception can be found to this general want of fidelity to nature in Rubens's animals.

It is in a painting of a dead lion, in the possession of Watson Taylor, Esq.

This admirable picture may be considered, for correctness in outline and chasteness and truth in colouring, as one of the finest specimens of art ever produced. The true secret of its excellence consists in its having been painted *from nature*, and when compared with

art when clothed with fine colouring, may be compared to the combination of bombastic and high sounding words which bear no connection with each other, and which when analysed by a moment's reflection, are discovered to be downright nonsense. Some connoisseurs entertain an opinion that correctness destroys freedom, and, in the preface to one of the catalogues of old paintings exhibited in the British gallery, the following remark on the works of Rubens will be found, namely, "*he never sacrificed freedom to correctness.*" This is at least a very dangerous observation, even if it were founded on sound principles, inasmuch as its obvious tendency must be to lead young artists into the fatal delusion that correctness destroys freedom; whereas in fact nothing can be free that is not strictly correct; for that which is not correct cannot be natural, and that which is not natural cannot be free.

It is clear that the ancient Greek artists considered no one part of their subject as inferior to another, for we find the same truth and the same skill exhibited in their horses as in their men, and this undoubtedly was not accomplished without long and arduous study in every department of their art.

"Nil actum reputans, si quid superesset agendum."

Taking a retrospective view of the foregoing strictures on the present state of art in this country, the Author is aware of the consequences of assuming the bold and hazardous position

other works of the same artist, it furnishes a most triumphant proof of the superiority of productions derived from that source, as well as of the folly of discarding that unerring standard of truth, for the ridiculous chimeras of imaginary perfection.

of dissenting from doctrines and opinions which have been sanctioned by custom, and upheld by academic authority. But he begs to disclaim any motives of arrogant self sufficiency, or petulant opposition.

The observations which he has offered have arisen from conviction, produced by long reflection, and from an ardent desire to contribute, in his humble sphere, to the welfare of art in his native land; and however some may be inclined to dispute the validity of his arguments, he trusts that none will doubt the purity of his zeal or the sincerity of his feelings. A time-serving policy and an attention to worldly considerations would have dictated a more obsequious concordance with the fallacies and prejudices of the day; but he who can compromise that genuine enthusiasm and independence of mind, which the true feeling of art inspires, for the sordid expectations of gain, is a traitor both to his own honour and to the best interests of his profession.

If what is here offered on this subject be true, it will stand the test of time; if false, it will carry with it its own condemnation. To that test, therefore, he cheerfully submits, with the consciousness of having endeavoured well, however inadequate his ability to accomplish the arduous task.

That his work will betray both errors and imperfections he has but too much reason to apprehend, but he derives consolation from reflecting that they are not the offspring of inconsiderate haste, or wilful inattention.

Disdaining that mercenary spirit which actuates the unprincipled and barren spoliator of other men's labours, who, with the view of gaining priority of publication, sends forth to the world, after the short space of two or three months employment, a composition which might at least

occupy as many years, he has not to reproach himself with the dishonourable act of substituting the ill-digested result of superficial investigation and precipitate construction, for that which the exertions of a whole life would be scarcely sufficient to effect with any degree of justice to the superlative excellence of a collection of art, that has no parallel in any specimens of human talent yet discovered.

To those liberal and highly respectable Subscribers who have honoured him with their patronage his sincerest gratitude is due; especially unto those who have personally exerted themselves in promoting the welfare of his publication.

Rescued by their generous confidence from the risk and uncertainty of eventual popularity, he has been enabled to overcome difficulties inseparable from the condition of those who, unaided by celebrity and circumscribed in means, have to struggle in obscurity for their daily bread.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATES.

IN the year 1801 the Earl of Elgin, at that time Ambassador at Constantinople, obtained permission from the Turkish government to remove several relics of ancient Grecian sculpture from the Parthenon, or Temple of Minerva at Athens.

Some difference of opinion has existed in regard to the propriety of that transaction, but it is perfectly unnecessary for the Author of this work to enter on a vindication of his lordship's conduct on that occasion. His lordship may, indeed, with truth exclaim, "non tali auxilio," &c. Every true friend to the fine arts, who is desirous that his native country should excel in that noble pursuit of the human mind, will hail the day when Lord Elgin first conceived the intention of transporting those wondrous relics to happier climes, where they have not only found a refuge from barbarian hands, but are brought within the view of thousands who are thus enabled to appreciate their superlative excellence, and who, but for their removal to this country, would never have enjoyed such an exalted gratification.

The liberality with which his lordship opened his collection to British artists, for the purposes of

study and improvement, is well known, and merits the manifestation of their gratitude by some permanent memorial which would be no less honourable to those who gave, than to him who received.

The Temple of Minerva or Parthenon, from which the sculpture which constitutes the subject of the present essay was taken, was situated about the centre of the Acropolis. The whole edifice was composed of the finest white marble, being about two hundred and seventeen feet in length, and ninety-eight feet in breadth. It was supported by fluted pillars of the doric order, forty-six in number, viz. eight at each front, and fifteen on each side. These were about forty-two feet in height and seventeen in circumference, and the distance from pillar to pillar was seven feet four inches.

The two fronts of the Temple stood East and West, and the former has suffered much more injury than the latter. The pediments of these fronts were adorned with a profusion of statues larger than life, and all of the most admirable workmanship. The metopes, or spaces between the triglyphs of the columns, were embellished with groups in alto relieveo, representing the combats of the Lapithæ with the Centaurs at the marriage of Pirithous; and the frieze of the cella was decorated with a series of basso reliefos, describing the Panathenaic procession to the Temple in honour of the goddess Minerva.

The figures which occupied the pediments were arranged in the order exhibited in Plate 1, which was taken from a drawing made upon the spot, under the direction of the Marquis de Nointel, in the year 1683. By that drawing it appears that the figures were much less mutilated at that time than they are at present.

It will be seen that the attitudes of the figures which occupied the pediment were adapted to the

quantity of space afforded in their respective situations. Thus those figures which were placed at the extreme angles of the pediment were made recumbent; for instance the Hyperion, the Theseus, the Ilyssus, and the first figure in the group of the Fates. Those next adjoining were represented in sitting postures; and those in the centre, where the greatest perpendicular extent was allowed, were formed standing upright. The whole of these figures were most admirable in their execution, but that which appears the best entitled to precedence is the

THESEUS.*

Plates 2, 3, 4, 5. No. 71.

THE unrivalled excellence in the form and attitude of this figure claims the highest commendation that can be bestowed on a work of art. When the position of the body is considered, the beautiful and elegant sweep from the head to the knees is most striking.

* M. Visconti, a celebrated antiquarian, calls this figure Hercules. His opinion, it is said, is founded on the circumstance of its sitting on a lion's skin, and also on the similarity of the attitude to the ancient medal of the Crotonian Hercules, in the possession of the British Museum.

The Author, having in a former part of this Essay acknowledged his ignorance in antiquarian matters, forbears offering any opinion on this question, deeming it the safest course to follow the Synopsis published by the Museum, both in regard to the name of this figure as well as of all the rest.

The subject of each Plate is numbered the same as the original in the Museum. It is possible, however, that the numbers on the originals may be altered at some future period, in consequence of a fresh arrangement, but against such a contingency it is impossible for the Author to provide. He therefore deemed it necessary to advert to that circumstance in order to account for any variation in the numbers which may hereafter take place.

The universal consent of action throughout every part of the trunk is such that the flexion is no where interrupted, and the perfectly quiescent state of all the muscles of the abdomen gives it that appearance of repose which it so well expresses. Nor would it be proper to omit noticing the skill and reflection of the ancient Greek artists, manifested by their close attention to such minutiae as contributed to the general force and effect of their subjects. Thus the wrinkle shewn above the navel of this figure clearly demonstrates that the descending action of the skin is arrested at that point of the surface which is fixed and stationary, and tends, in a principal degree, to give that wonderful semblance of pliability which beguiles the mind of the spectator from the recollection that the surface is, in reality, but a hard and inflexible material. Such a circumstance would, perhaps, be thought unworthy of attention in modern art, but it speaks volumes in support of Athenian judgment and fidelity.

The left arm, upon which the figure rests, is thrown backwards, and the triceps muscle, by being shortened, becomes thicker in substance; but this thickening is so skilfully performed as to have no appearance of hardness or contraction, but rather that of being perfectly flaccid and moveable. The beautiful accuracy with which the processes of the elbow joint are described is also worthy of observation. The receding of the head of the thigh bone into the hip, in consequence of the knees being expanded, bespeaks their anatomical knowledge; and the delicate undulations and inflexions of the muscles of the thighs, combined with the accurate and regular form of the tendons at their insertion into the leg, so clearly define each distinct part as not only to distinguish muscle from bone, but in fact to substitute the character of flesh for marble. The knee joints, also, are remarkably beautiful, and display most perfectly the mechanism of nature in that particular part.

The shape of the left leg exhibits a fine masculine character and proportion combined with the utmost symmetry and elegance. The vein which passes down the surface of the leg proves that the Greek artists of that period considered the observance of such minutiae as necessary to the completion and perfection of their works.

The same delineation of veins may be seen in the torso of the Neptune in the same collection, and this circumstance clearly shews, that, in the personifications of their deities, they adhered to the same system of giving to the body and limbs all the natural attributes of humanity. This fact is worthy of remark, because, in the Apollo, and in other works of that date, this practice has not been adopted, and the omission of it has been constantly defended by the connoisseurs of the present day, on the plea that as the figures were intended to represent gods, they should be divested of any of the common indications of mortality.

The back of this matchless figure is so grand and so beautiful that nature herself might have been proud to have produced it. The graceful curve of the posterior muscle of the neck, and the delicate protuberance of the first vertebra of the back, are worthy of observation. The well regulated amplitude of the shoulders, and the correct and just disposition of the muscles belonging to them, are singularly conspicuous; for although the risings and sinkings of the different masses are marked with boldness and decision, still they melt so thoroughly into each other, as to preserve the same breadth and harmony as is seen in nature. The trapezius muscle is shewn with great accuracy and judgment, for it will be seen that at its termination it is not equally divided by the back bone, as it would have been, had the body been in a perfectly straight direction; but as the left shoulder is thrown back, all that side of the back bone becomes narrower, and consequently

that portion of the trapezius partakes of the same diminution in breadth. These points may appear but trifles to a superficial observer, but they constitute, nevertheless, the true secret of that pliancy which so amply distinguishes these matchless works from all others whatsoever.

The mutilated remains of the head and face, if viewed on the right side, are still sufficiently perfect to denote its noble and decided character. “Os humerosque deo similis.”

On the whole this admirable specimen of Grecian sculpture combines in such a transcendent degree the various qualities of dignity in attitude, elegance and proportion in form, and anatomical fidelity, that were it the only relic of that immortal school, it would be fully sufficient to confirm all the records of their taste and skill, and to justify the observation of an ancient writer on the merits of those great artists,

“Totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet.”

When compared with the productions of a later date, such as the Apollo, Antinous, Meleager, and the celebrated Torso, so much studied by Michael Angelo, its superiority is most forcibly manifest.*

* That the Author is not singular in his opinion respecting the inferiority of the Apollo when compared with the Theseus, the following extract from the evidence given before the Committee of the House of Commons will amply testify.

In that report it will be found that Sir Thomas Lawrence and Mr. Westmacott, in the true spirit of open and liberal conviction, and with a candid relinquishment of early professional prejudices, gave their testimonies on that occasion in the following clear and unequivocal manner. Mr. Westmacott, on being asked “in what rate he should place the Theseus, and the River God, as compared with the Apollo

The Torso, the perfection of which it would have been heresy but a short time ago to have doubted, is a compound of *manner*, anatomical error and bombast. The thighs, which are of an overcharged and unnatural form, are stuck on to the body without the appearance of any joint whatever, and in contradistinction to that receding action of the head of the thigh bone so beautifully and correctly described in the Theseus, they appear to expand at the hips instead of being confined within the joints, and hence the distance between their inner surfaces is so great as to be in direct opposition to the truth of nature. The weight of a body naturally flattens the seat when in a sitting posture, but this figure seems as if seated on two round balls, which form cannot occur in the glutæi muscles when they are pressed upon by the weight above them. The right thigh is so unnaturally curved as to have the appearance of the bone being broken, and the inferior surface is loaded with

and the Laocoön;" replied, "infinitely superior to the Apollo Belvidere." And a little further he observed, in answer to a question respecting the comparative merit of the Theseus with the Ilyssus, that "the back of the Theseus was the finest thing in the world, and that the anatomical skill displayed in the front of the Ilyssus was not surpassed by any work of art."

On the same occasion, Sir Thomas Lawrence stated that "he thought the Elgin Marbles were of a higher class than the Apollo Belvidere, because he considered that there was in them an union of fine composition and very grand form, *with a more true and natural expression of the effect of action upon the human frame, than there is in the Apollo, or in any other of the most celebrated statues.*" And in another part of his evidence, in confirmation of his opinion that "*the truth and imitation of nature added to their value,*" he observes, "there is in them that variety which is produced in the human form, by the alternate action and repose of muscles, that strikes one particularly. I have myself (he continues) a good collection of the best casts from the antique statues, and was struck with that difference in them on returning from the Elgin Marbles to my own house." Such were the opinions of those gentlemen, and it is but justice to them to take the present opportunity of observing that they discharged their duty with a proper feeling for the true interests of their profession, disdaining any unworthy subserviency to modern dogmas, or antiquarian fastidiousness.

fleshy and partial protuberances in a part where it should describe nothing but the straightness and regularity of the tendons of the flexor muscles.

The surface of the body, especially the shoulders, is covered with unconnected masses of flesh, destroying that breadth and harmony which are so manifest in the shoulders of the Theseus; and it is no defence to urge that it was designed for a Hercules; for such a confused and undefined distribution of protuberant parts, so far from conveying any just idea of muscular power, produces the opposite effect by giving the surface an appearance of flabbiness and disease.

In the legs of the Theseus, the knee joint is most beautifully and correctly designed, being perfectly free from that tortuous articulation so conspicuous in all figures of a bad taste. Indeed it is a peculiar feature in all the works in this collection, and strongly characteristic of the skill and judgment displayed therein, that the joints are all perfectly defined and understood, yet modulated sufficiently to prevent them from disturbing the general harmony of the limb by being too marked and prominent.

In the Apollo, the Antinous, and the Meleager, the different portions of the limbs appear to run one into the other without preserving sufficiently those divisions and distinctions which are necessary to give the idea of flexion and extension. This is an affectation of *ideal* nature, the offspring of a false taste and vitiated conception, and undoubtedly is the cause of that stiffness which marks the outlines of those figures, but which, according to the notions of some modern artists, constitutes what they choose to denominate a square, classical and refined style of composition.

THE ILYSSUS.

Plate 6. No. 70.

THIS beautiful recumbent statue represents the personification of a small stream that ran along the south side of the plain of Athens.

It was placed on the left angle of the west pediment of the Parthenon. Its fidelity to nature is equally conspicuous as in the Theseus, and the anatomical skill of the artist is manifested in an extraordinary degree in the correct distinction observed between the muscles that are in action and those that are in a quiescent state.

On the upper surface of the body the line is simple and flaccid, changing its form only in compliance with the bones of the pelvis. In the under surface the oblique muscles of the abdomen appear perfectly pliant and pendulous, as well as the muscles of that thigh which is uppermost, and the modulation of the knee of the lower thigh is such as to baffle all attempts at panegyric. The division of the chest from the abdomen is most admirably described, and the partial protuberance of the surface on the lower side clearly points out the seat of the stomach, which, in consequence of the position of the body, is pressing against that particular part. The composition of this figure alone is sufficient to refute the idea that the Greeks did not study anatomy, for the mere observance of the surface of the naked figure would never have imparted that skill which is so manifest in this admirable production.

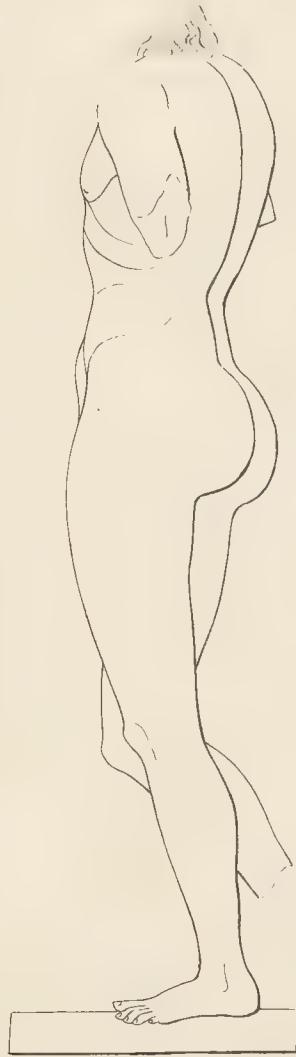
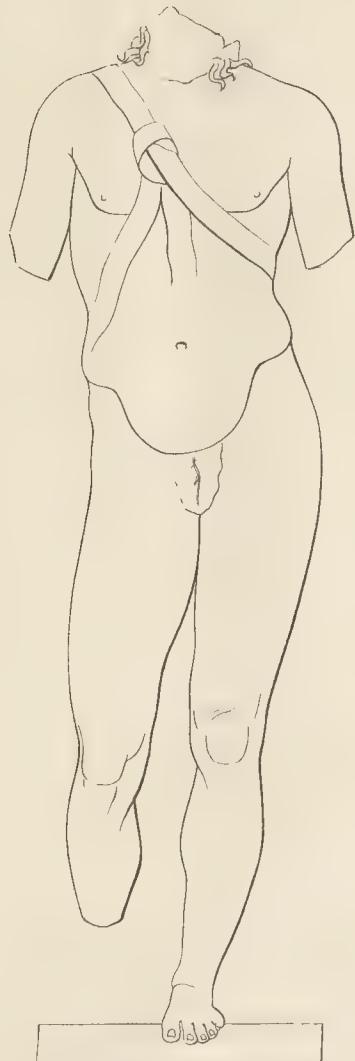
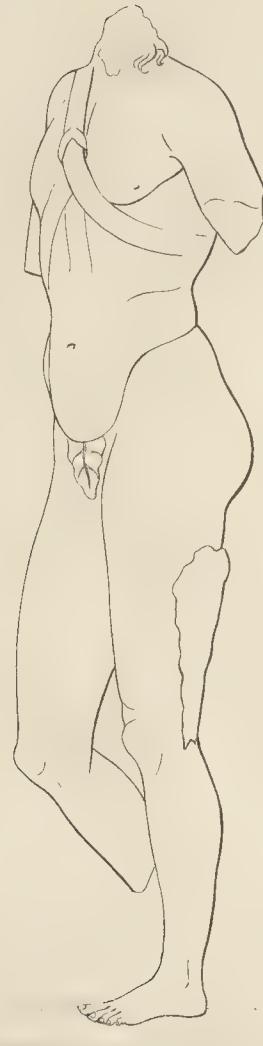
THE CUPID.

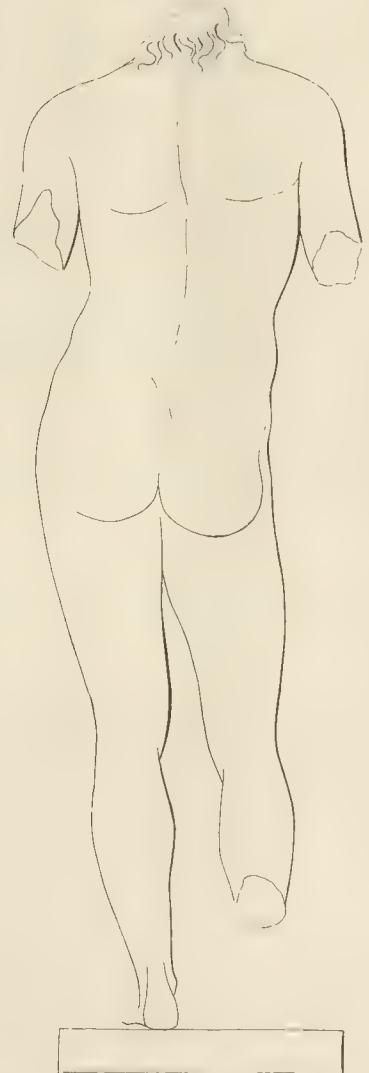
Plates 7 and 8.

THIS beautiful figure has given birth to much speculation in regard to the object it was intended to represent, especially as there is no account of the precise situation in which it was found, or to what building it originally belonged. The most prevalent opinion appears to be that it was designed for a Cupid. The only appendage that remains is a belt, which passes from the right shoulder across the breast to the left oblique abdominal muscle, whilst another part of the belt takes the opposite direction; but this portion does not derive its origin from the left shoulder, but commences at the breast, and loses itself by melting into the surface of the body just above the right hip. A third portion of the belt drops perpendicularly from the breast, and terminates in the mutilated surface of the recti muscles of the abdomen. The figure was supported by being attached to the trunk of a tree on the left side from the knee nearly up to the hip, as is indicated by the mutilated surface of the thigh. The left arm was thrown backwards and bent at the elbow, and most probably the hand was resting on the trunk or post. The head was turned to the right side, as appears by the hair dropping lowest on the left side of the neck. The hair was evidently left in an unfinished state.

Although the head, hands and one of the feet are lost or destroyed, still there is more of the surface of this figure in its original polished state than is to be found in any other specimen in the collection.

There is a figure at Rome known by the appellation of the "Genius of the Vatican,"





which, in regard to size and attitude, bears a considerable degree of resemblance to the present subject. The head and trunk are perfect, but the lower parts of the arms are wanting, neither is there the appearance of any belt whatever. It is a half length figure terminating at the pubis.

A cast of this figure was placed by the side of the one in question for the purpose of comparative investigation, and its inferiority was singularly manifest. The body was totally devoid of that beautiful serpentine inflexion which so eminently distinguishes the Elgin statue, whilst the right arm appeared as if it was stuck on to the shoulder and thrust into the side. The surface was destitute of that delicate undulation which gives the true resemblance of flesh, and all the divisions of the body were marked in that hard systematic manner which totally destroys all indication of motion or flexibility.

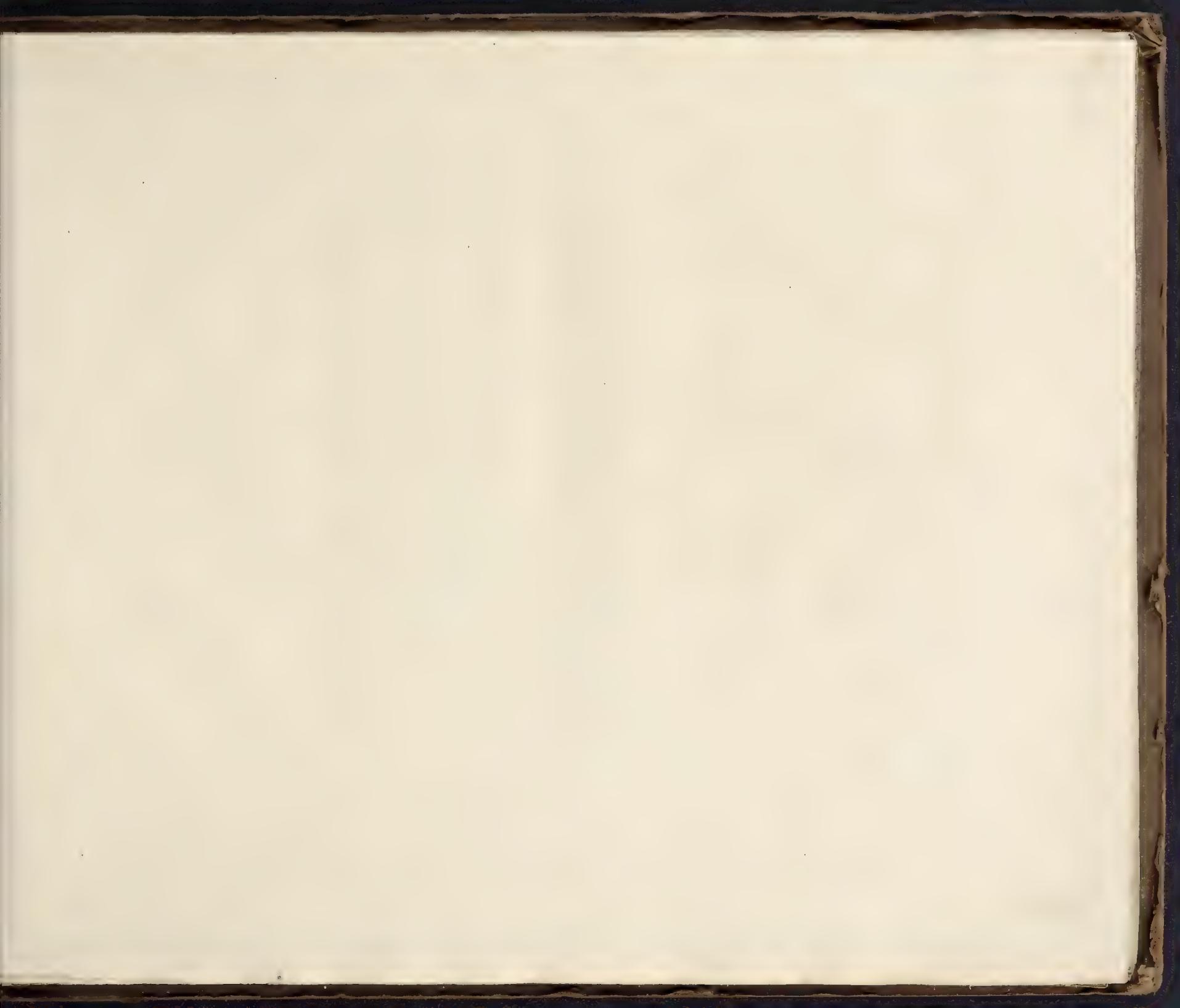
If this figure was intended for a duplicate of that which is in the Elgin collection, it is most probable that it was executed by recollection only. At all events it affords a triumphant proof of the vast superiority of the Elgin relic.

In the Elgin statue the distinguishing points consist in the extreme simplicity and elegance of the attitude, and the sweet and delicate inflections and undulations of the surface. The difference between parts in action and those in repose is strictly observed in this figure as well as in all the rest in this matchless collection. The left thigh and leg, by which it is principally supported, shew that firmness and rigidity of muscle which is the necessary attendant on action, whilst in the right thigh and leg, which are resting simply on the toes, the muscles are all relaxed and pendulous, giving that beautiful inflexion to the inside of the thigh which so correctly distinguishes it from

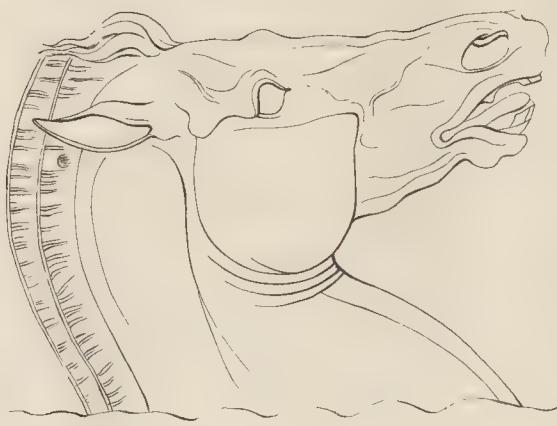
the action of the other. The length of the thighs also gives them a very elegant and graceful proportion. The division of the body from the limbs is most delicately shewn by a just difference in the degrees of projection of the oblique muscles of the abdomen, according to the different degrees of convexity in the various parts of the hips, and not by that hard, regular and equally protuberating line which marks all figures of a bad taste.

Having thus feebly attempted to describe its superlative beauty and excellence, the Author confesses his inability to throw any light on the personification of this figure. Exhibiting in its form that semifeminine character which is descriptive of the youthful and graceful male, it might with equal propriety have been designed for a young Apollo, an Adonis, a Ganymede, an Endymion, or a Hymen, as for a Cupid. At all events it is a most interesting composition, and manifests the same pure and exalted sentiment combined with that strict attention to nature, which renders this incomparable collection so pre-eminent over all other specimens of art yet discovered.

At the time when the Elgin collection remained at Burlington House, this statue was scattered in fragments on the ground; and, owing to that circumstance, its extraordinary beauty was not discovered until Mr. Westmacott joined the parts together in that skilful and correct manner in which it now appears.



27



28



27. 28

1861. Drawn by R. H. Mearns. 1st April 1861





HYPERION.

Plates 9 and 10. No. 65.

THIS group represents the God of Day rising from the Ocean, to run his course.

It was placed at the right extremity of the eastern pediment: the arms of the figure are extremely fine, and exhibit the appearance of strength combined with elegance. The head of the right hand horse, which is the only one remaining, is full of fire and animation, and the concave incurvation of the nose presents a peculiarity of form that is frequently found amongst horses of the Arabian and Barbary breeds.

Of the head of the figure no fragment remains, and it might furnish a subject for some speculation whether the hair was represented dripping with moisture, or whether it preserved that beautiful curling of the tresses which usually embellishes the God of Day.

That the manes of the horses in this group conveyed no appearance of being wet is evident by the forelock of the right hand head, which is not pendulous, but flowing upwards to the vertical point of the skull, and which direction would not have been consistent with the idea of its being wet.

The surface of the water very properly exhibits that gentle ripple which would take place at the gradual emerging of a body from the Ocean, accompanied with a slight indication of an eddy behind the shoulders of the figure; and corresponds with that tranquil and majestic rising of the sun which may be seen at sea, and which is so beautifully represented in the matchless pictures by Claude Lorain.

The Plate preceding this (No. 9,) represents the horse's head belonging to this group in its present mutilated state, together with the same restored.

THE IRIS.

Plate 11. No. 74.

THE remains of this figure are sufficient to indicate the original excellence of its composition. The speed with which the messenger of the gods is supposed to move is finely expressed by the position of the legs, as well as by the floating of the drapery in the surrounding air. The fragment which is attached to the shoulders is what remains of the veil which was represented as acted upon by the wind in conjunction with the rest of the drapery.

This figure was placed in the eastern pediment, near to the centre.

THE FATES.

Plate 12. No. 63.

THIS group, when in its original situation, consisted of three female figures. The first was made recumbent in order to accord with the angle of the pediment; of the two others which are in sitting positions, the second sits very low in consequence of the leg and thigh being brought close together, by which means it is also better adapted to the space which it occupies than it otherwise would have been. The third is sitting with the thighs perfectly horizontal.

111

110



1712

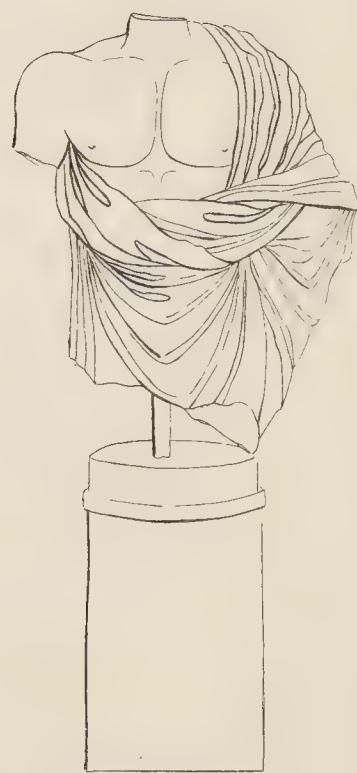
1063



Rich'd G. Annesley del & sculpsit

London Published by Rich'd G. Annesley R. 1712





Museo Nazionale del Bargello



London Published by Richard Gough 1791



The figures are so much mutilated that the drapery constitutes at present the chief beauty of the composition. The detail of the folds is extremely minute and elaborate, but it is so judiciously arranged and so happily contrasted with the broad expansion of opposing parts, as to have the finest general effect, and to exhibit at a distance a proper breadth and distinction of masses.

The disposition of the folds betrays no marks of formality or studied design; on the contrary, every fold appears to be the result of an accidental direction given to it by some fortuitous change in the position of the body. The same attention to the finishing of the posterior side of the figures is manifested in this group as it is in the Theseus and Ilyssus, although those parts could not be seen when placed in the pediment; and this circumstance proves that such was the love of their art cherished by those eminent sculptors that they could not leave any part of their works unfinished, even in cases where such a neglect could not have been detected. The left arm of the second figure, when viewed behind, is extremely beautiful.

This group was placed at the angle of the eastern pediment.

CARYATIS.

Plate 13. No. 43.

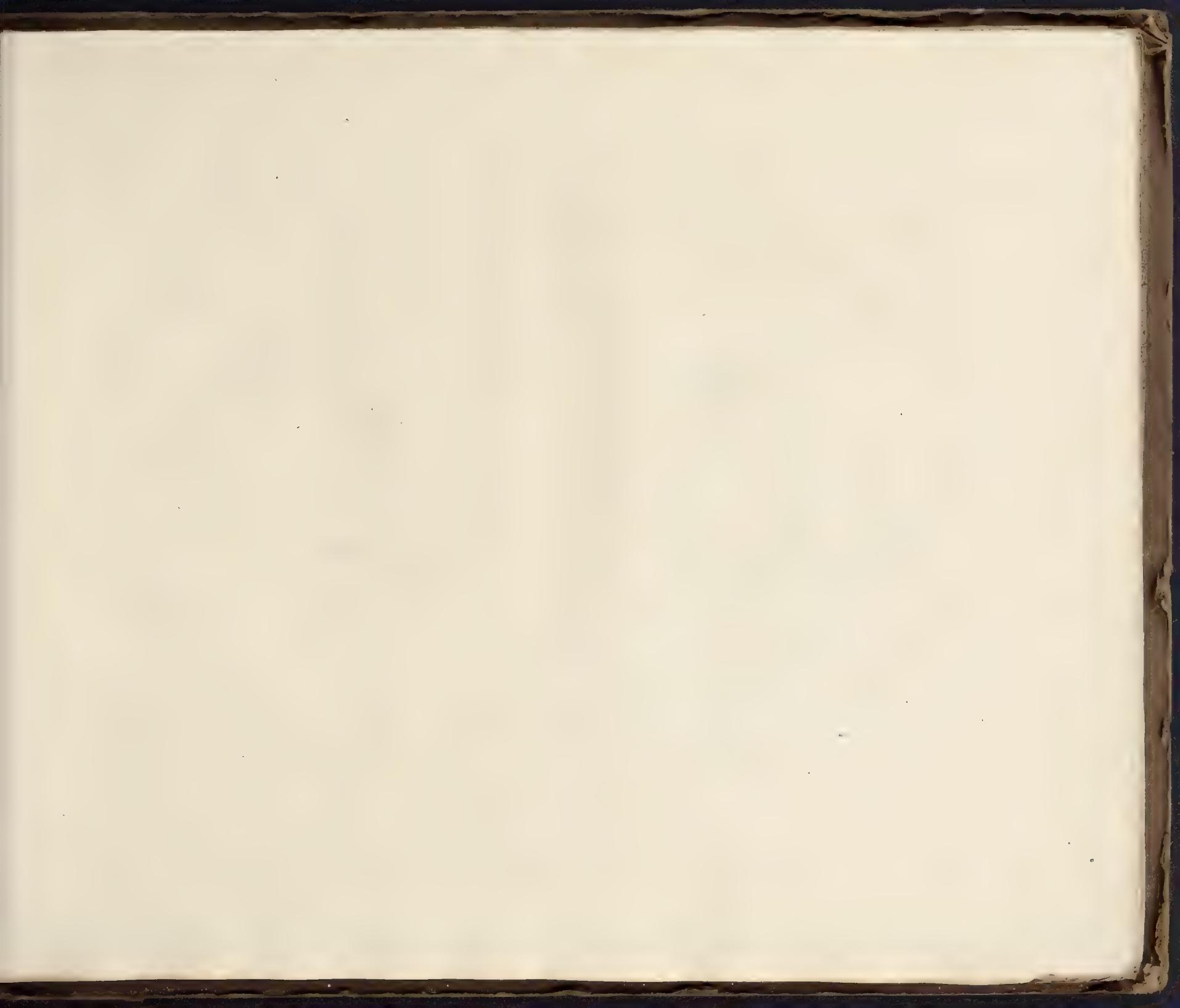
THE entablature of the Temple of Pandrosus was supported by six of these figures. According to Vitruvius, it appears that after the defeat of the Persians, and the destruction of the city of Carya, the architects of those times placed female figures of this description in public buildings to perpetuate the ignominy of those who deserted the cause of liberty and their country.

The style of this figure, as far as the subject will admit, is very elegant, and the drapery is so disposed as to give the lower part the resemblance of a fluted column.

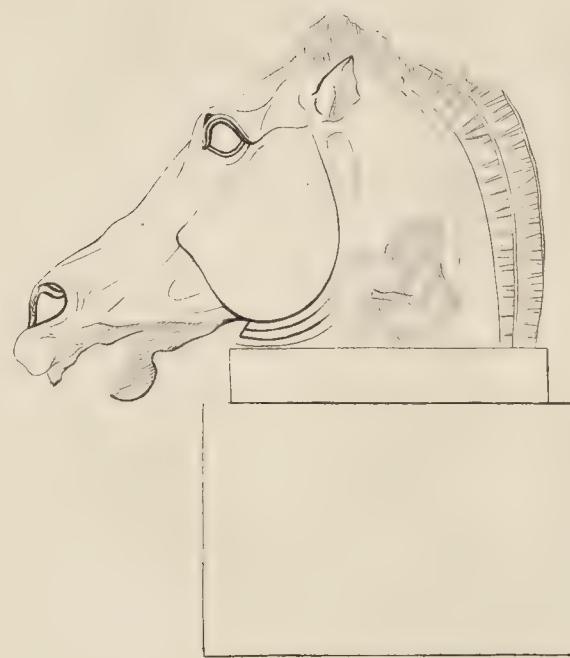
It has been reported that the removal of this figure occasioned particular uneasiness to the present inhabitants of Athens, who state that from that period lamentations have been heard every night on the spot which it occupied, supposed to proceed from the figures that are still remaining.

What effect this doleful tale may have had on the minds of our British dilettanti at large there are no particular means of ascertaining, but it is certain that an English nobleman has had a fac simile of the Caryatis in the British Museum moulded in artificial stone, to be sent to Athens for the purpose of replacing that which was taken away. Whether the remaining five will be satisfied with this representative of their departed sister remains to be proved, but the circumstance is at least honourable to the feelings of the nobleman above mentioned.

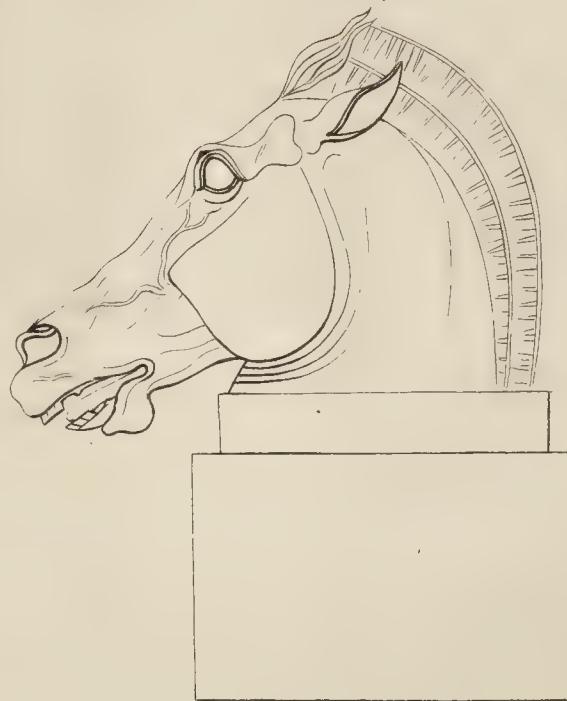
Of the other two figures contained in this Plate, the one represents a young Esculapius, the other a draped figure unknown.



N°14



N°68.



HORSE'S HEAD

BELONGING TO THE CAR OF NIGHT.

Plate 14. No. 68.

THIS admirable production of art exhibits such a close imitation of nature, as almost to induce the belief that it was moulded from a living head. The principle of life seems to vibrate in every line, and the expression is so true and indicative of that sprightly ardour which distinguishes the noble and generous stud, as to correspond fully with Virgil's beautiful description;

“ Primus et ire viam, et fluvios tentare minaces audet.”

Some artists, as well as connoisseurs, have considered this to be an *ideal* head, but such an idea is perfectly erroneous. It is true that it differs from that coarse and fleshy character, and the ram-like nose which so strongly characterise Rubens's horses, as well as the common cart-horses of this country, and which are originally of the Flemish breed. But numerous living subjects may be discovered amongst race-horses, and the better bred coach-horses, the heads of which are perfect fac similes of this exquisite model.

The full prominent eye, the lean and capacious nostril, the deep and pointed mouth, and the flat cheek, are all points of beauty in this elegant quadruped, and though not so frequently seen as the coarse and common form, are nevertheless strictly natural. This sort of head in the horse may be compared to the Grecian face in the man, and equally constitutes the principle of beauty.

In examining the detail of the execution of this excellent piece of sculpture, artists will do well

to observe that there are none of those irregular lines in the eye-lids, nostrils and lips, which mark the style of most of the old painters, and indeed of the modern in their representations of this animal. Irregular lines are erroneously supposed to give freedom and force to the parts in question, but in reality they produce the opposite effect; for, when the eye-lids are raised and opened to their full extent, the outline must necessarily be regular and uninterrupted, owing to the tension which takes place in the skin; and the same rule applies to the nostril when in a state of distension from increased respiration.

The mouth also, when acted upon by the bit, is stretched upwards towards the neck, and in that state the outline of the lips must be smooth and regular. Moreover, wrinkling of the skin denotes relaxation, and the two opposite actions of tension and relaxation cannot take place in the same part at the same time.

This matchless head, when compared with those of the celebrated Venetian bronze horses, and with that in the Monte Cavallo group, and further with that of the equestrian statue at Charing-cross, and with all others of modern date, is infinitely superior in every point of view. The Venetian heads are heavy and undefined masses, having no indication of bone in them, and appearing as if swoln by disease, and are in no degree entitled to that praise which has been bestowed upon them. The head of the animal in the Monte Cavallo group (for it may be called any thing but a horse) needs no comment whatever.*

* It is a matter of considerable doubt whether the horse originally formed a part of this group.

The attitude of the man is that of a Gladiator defending himself with a shield, as is evident by the points of attachment of the strap on the inside of the arm, and also by the position of the arm itself.

In the statue at Charing-cross, the eye of the horse resembles the human in the oval shape of the eye-lids and in its being placed in the front of the head instead of the side. Of all the rest it is only necessary to say, "ex uno disce omnes."

The expression of the head in the Elgin collection has been erroneously described by some connoisseurs, as that of a horse *neighing*, when, in reality, it has not the smallest resemblance to that action. The mouth is open, it is true, but it does not necessarily follow from that circumstance, that the animal must be in the act of neighing. The expressions of the horse are very few in number, and may, in fact, be confined to three, namely, fear, anger, and desire. The distinctions between these are well marked, and cannot be mistaken by those who have studied the form and attributes of the animal with attention. In the human countenance there is a much greater variety, many of the expressions being of a compound character; but in the horse they are simple and decided.

The variation in the expression of the horse's countenance is produced chiefly by the change of position in the ears, and in the outline and capacity of the nostrils. These changes are very simple and distinct, and are invariably the same in every individual of the species. The most beautiful and animated expression which the horse exhibits is that of desire. This is always accompanied by neighing, and at the same time the ears are projected forwards, the eye-lids are

The right hand also exhibits the position of holding a sword. Had the man been in the act of restraining an impetuous horse, the inclination of his body would rather have been backwards than forwards.

elevated above the transparent circle of the eye, shewing the white part, and the nostrils are distended and thrown downwards towards the points of the lips, having a vibrating motion in unison with the shake of the voice, whilst the mouth is moderately open, to the extent perhaps of an inch.

In the head in the Elgin collection the ears are erect and pointing backwards, the eye-lids shew their common degree of expansion, the nostrils, instead of being dilated and thrown downwards, are expanded and drawn upwards towards the eye, the under lip is retracted, whilst the mouth is drawn upwards to the greatest extent, and which is the natural consequence of the action of the bit when the animal is forcibly restrained by the bridle. The expression, therefore, of this head is that of an ardent and impetuous horse pulled in by the hand of the driver.

The expression of fear bears some similarity to that of desire, in the projection of the ears forwards towards the object, the protrusion of the nostrils downwards, and the elevation of the eye-lids; but it is distinguished by the mouth being invariably closed, and not open as in neighing.

In the expression of anger the very reverse of these appearances takes place in every respect; for the ears are violently contracted and drawn backwards and downwards on the poll of the neck; the mouth is opened, the lips separated so as to shew the teeth, the upper lip being elevated to its utmost extent, the nostrils compressed and drawn upwards so as to be nearly closed, and the skin of the nose thrown into transverse wrinkles.

It is necessary to remark that there is a trifling peculiarity in the head in the Elgin collection which has given birth to a conjecture that some particular effect was intended to be produced by it.

This peculiarity consists in the right eye being somewhat lower and nearer to the nostril than the left. But this variation is evidently increased by the circumstance of the left eye-lid being greatly corroded, so as to have lost nearly half an inch of surface, whilst the right eye-lid is perfect and in its original state. The head also inclines horizontally to the left side, which naturally contributes to raise the right eye above the left. The foregoing physiognomical distinctions may perhaps be thought trifling by those who consider it to be sufficient, in their representations of quadrupeds, to give nothing more than the general character of each animal. But this indifference to variety of expression is not merely the result of custom but of ignorance arising from neglecting to study nature with that attention and precision which are indispensably requisite to attain truth and excellence.

That the Greek artists considered such a system of study as not only not unworthy of their attention, but absolutely essential, is proudly manifest in their admirable productions, and holds out an example worthy of imitation in modern times.

To this want of skill in Hippiatrics amongst modern artists and connoisseurs may be ascribed those inapposite similes and illustrations of this head which have been taken from the book of Job, such as "he neigheth afar off," and "his neck is clothed with thunder," the latter of which must necessarily appear ludicrous when applied to a horse that is *hog-maned*, as is the case with the specimen above mentioned.

THE CENTAURS AND LAPITHÆ.

THESE beautiful groups in alto relievo occupied the external frieze of the Temple at the height of about forty feet from the ground. They were ninety-two in number, and were placed alternately between the triglyphs of the columns.

They illustrate the combats of the Lapithæ with the Centaurs at the marriage of Pirithous as related by Ovid. In some of these groups the Lapithæ are represented as victorious, in others the Centaurs. The extraordinary excellence displayed in them may be considered as of a twofold description, inasmuch as the latter partake equally of the form of the man and of the horse. There is however a considerable difference in the degree of merit amongst them, as well as in regard to their state of mutilation.

Plate 15. No. 1.

IN this group the Centaur is represented as victorious, and the difference of action and expression between the two figures is admirably supported throughout.

The death-like inanition of the Lapitha, opposed to the triumphant air of the Centaur, is managed with great skill and judgment. The extension of the left arm of the Centaur, and the whisking of the tail upwards, give the character of exultation, whilst the horizontal position of the Lapitha and the pendulous state of the head, with the shoulders raised upwards and the arms held close to the sides, as if in the moment of expiring, furnish the most complete contrast imaginable. Nor should



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J. Lawrence did. 1800.

Engraved & published by R. & S. Lawrence. 1st April 1803.

the judicious disposition of the legs of the Lapitha pass unnoticed, especially the right leg, which, by the elevation of the knee, prevents that uninterrupted parallelism of lines which would otherwise have existed between the bodies of the two figures.

The skin held by the left arm of the Centaur is a remarkably close imitation of nature, and although composed of marble has all the appearance of leather. The shape of the Centaur is very elegant and beautiful, particularly the horse part. The form of the hind quarters and haunches is finely understood, and the angular flexion of the different parts so correct, as to preserve a proper equilibrium and centre of gravity to the body.

Plate 16. No. 3.

THIS group has been supposed to represent the chief of the Centaurs in the act of carrying off the bride, but as there were other females at the marriage feast who were borne away by different Centaurs, of course there is no certainty as to the identity of this particular group.

The attitude of the Centaur, although in a state of progression, is not so elevated as in some of the rest, the body inclining backwards to counterbalance the weight of the woman whom he is carrying. The right hand was originally raised upwards above the head, and held the wrist of the right arm of the female, whilst the left hand held the other. The composition of the whole possesses considerable merit, but the execution is not of so high a cast as that of No. 1 preceding.

Plate 17. No. 6.

THIS may with justice be considered the most beautiful specimen among the Metopes, as it exhibits an elegance of character superior in most respects to any of the rest. It represents the Lapitha in the act of pushing the Centaur backwards. For this purpose the left hand of the man is locked fast with the left hand of the Centaur, and the straight forward vigorous action of the arm of the former is finely contrasted by the ineffectual resistance described in the bent arm of the latter.

The extraordinary elegance in the form of the left leg and thigh of the Lapitha is not exceeded by any specimen of art extant, nor does the beauty of the body fail to accord with the excellence of the limb. The same exquisite symmetry and elegance pervades the whole figure of the Centaur, and his nearly subdued state is well expressed by his tail tucked inwards, as well as by the position of the hinder legs, which clearly denotes the moment of losing his equilibrium.

Plate 18. No. 7.

IN this group the Lapitha is performing the opposite action to that represented in the preceding Plate, namely, endeavouring to pull the Centaur over backwards, as is shewn by the left arm and hand encircling the head of the Centaur. The position of the figure is superlatively grand and sublime, and affords a most convincing proof that the greatest energy and exertion may be expressed without having recourse to that violent and abrupt intersection and that overcharged fulness of muscle which characterise the works of Michael Angelo and others of that school.

Pl 17

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Rich^d Lawrence del & sculpt

London Published by Rich^d Lawrence 1st April, 1818

1768

177



Rich'd Lawrence del & sculpt

London Published by Rich'd Lawrence 1st April 1778

The moment of collecting his strength, and the involuntary suspension of respiration which is necessarily produced by the violent contraction and rigidity of the muscles of the trunk, are most admirably and correctly shewn by the consequent concavity of the external line of the belly, and the increased bulk of the chest arising from the stomach and the intestines being forced by the contraction of the abdominal muscles upwards against the diaphragm. The right thigh is most beautifully described both in regard to form and anatomical precision, and yields, in those points, to nothing in the collection. The entire contour of this figure is most graceful and vigorous, and presents a high specimen of the chaste and exalted style of Grecian sculpture at that period, and it is worthy of observation that, in this figure as well as in all the rest of the Metopes, the superior and posterior parts of the shoulders are executed with an astonishing beauty and fidelity. These parts, however, are unfortunately out of the reach of the eye of the spectator.

The Centaur in this group is inferior to those in No. 1 and No. 6 in the horse part; evincing no particular skill or taste in the composition or in the detail. Mr. Visconti, and others who have followed him, erroneously describe the Centaur as having his hands tied behind him, whereas the left hand and arm were raised upwards, as is proved by the hand still remaining attached to the left side of the head, as well as by the form and position of the left shoulder and the remaining part of the humerus, which evidently take a direction upwards. The broad mass of expanded drapery behind the figure gives a fine relief to the body, and proves that the artist knew how to avail himself of such an appendage. Some connoisseurs have supposed that this figure, from its size, was intended as the personification of Theseus, but this of course is mere matter of conjecture.

Plate 19. No. 9.

EXHIBITS the Lapitha as nearly subdued by the Centaur. The figure of the man is very happily disposed, and shews great elasticity in every part. The countenance conveys the expression of pain mixed with alarm. The right foot is singularly chaste and beautiful, and may be considered a master-piece of art in that difficult branch of it, the formation of the extremities.

The face of the Centaur presents the feelings of anger and determination, and the body is well and correctly defined in regard to the action, and the consequent variety in the form of the muscles.

Plate 20. No. 11.

IN this group the Centaur is very inferior both in form and execution. The figure of the Lapitha is extremely animated, and produces, conjunctively with the position of the Centaur, what is termed in art, a pyramidal group. There is some good marking about the right leg and thigh of the man.

Plate 21. No. 12.

THE Centaur, which is all that remains of the original group, is one of the finest representations of that heterogeneous animal in the collection. The shape of the horse part is remarkably beautiful, and is such as any connoisseur in horses would prefer. The anatomical correctness of the leg is admirable in every point of view.

1710

1711



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Pl 20

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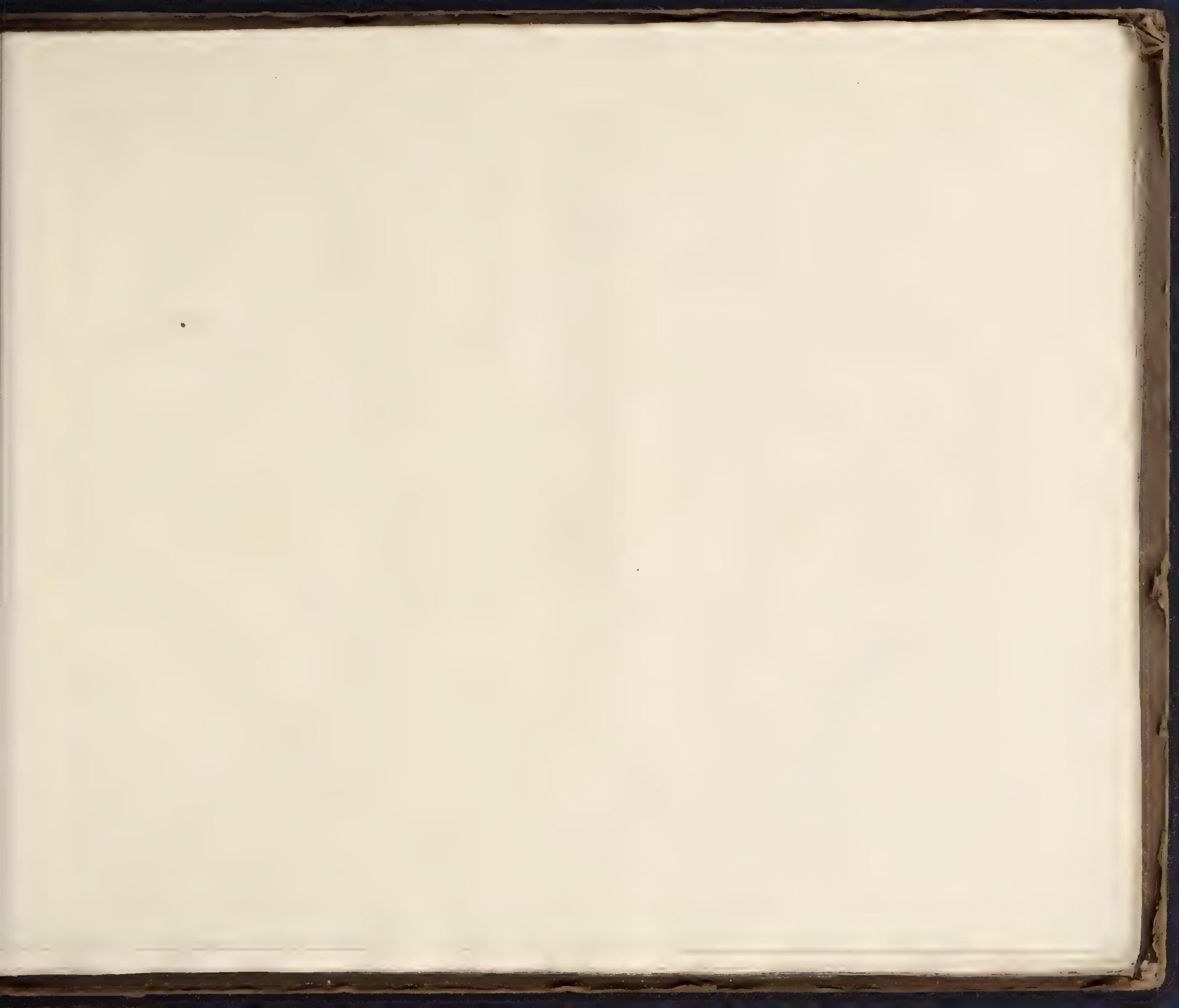
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London Published by Rich^d Lawrence 1st April 1797



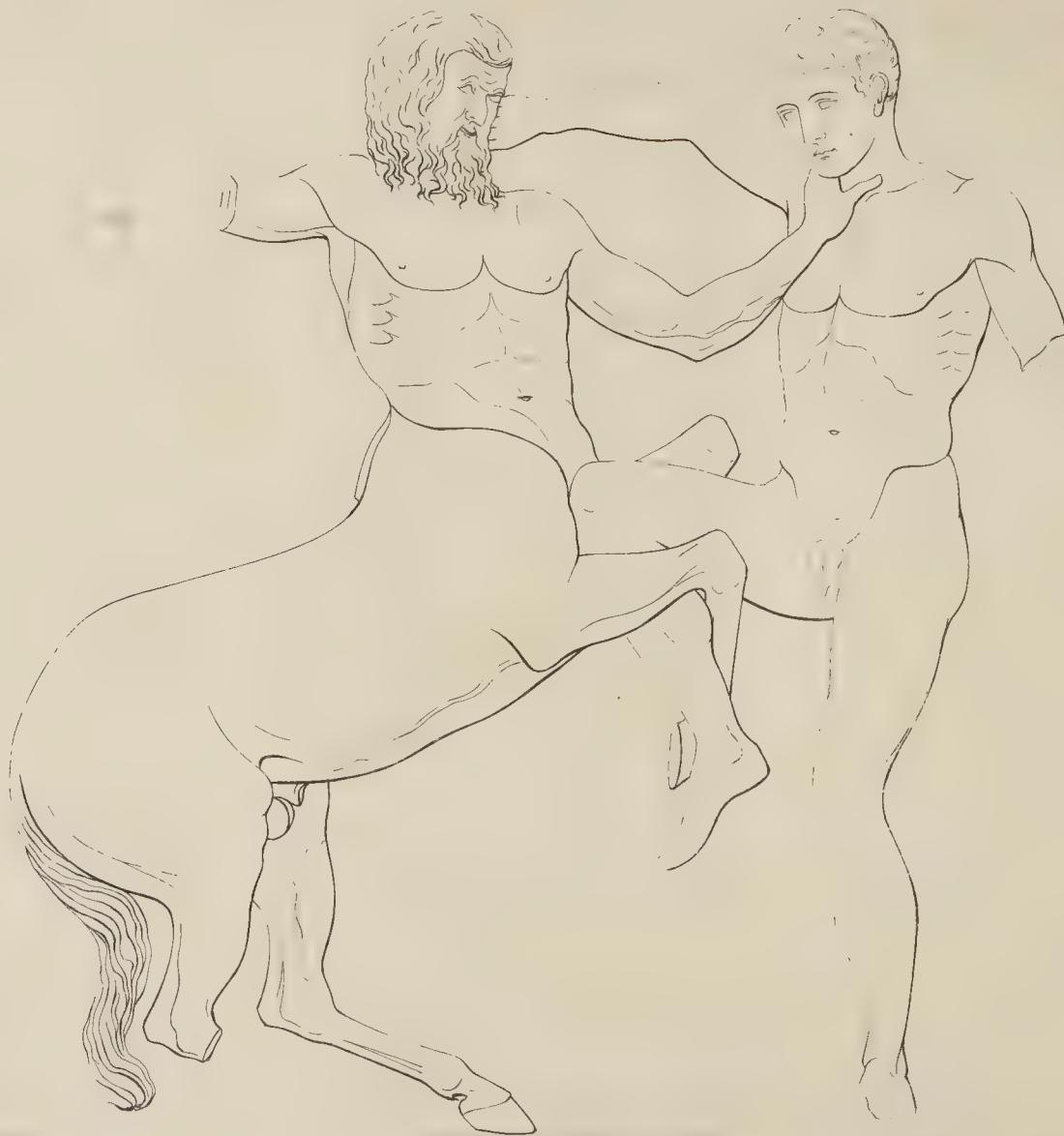
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London Published by Redd's Library. 1770.



Pl 22

107



Rich Lawrence del v. after

London Published by Rich Lawrence F. R. S. 1813

Plate 22. No. 14.

PRESENTS a very elaborate and correct group. The arrangement of the limbs of the figures is both free and masterly, and the entwining of their legs with each other gives a mutual support to their respective positions. The forcing up of the lower part of the thigh of the Lapitha, in consequence of the pressure against it from the knee of the Centaur, marks that close attention to the real and actual appearance of parts in the human frame, when under the influence of particular actions, which governed the operations of those pre-eminent sculptors.

There are seven more Metopes besides those here described, but as they are either very much mutilated or are very inferior in original excellence to the rest, the Author did not consider them of sufficient importance to be introduced into his work, especially as its circumscribed limits would not have admitted their insertion except by the exclusion of more interesting specimens from other branches of the collection.

In the composition of these admirable groups in alto relievo, the variety of attitude is very remarkable, especially when it is considered that the limbs were kept as parallel as possible with the surface of the tablet, for the purpose of preventing them from being exposed to the risk of being broken, the probability of which would have been much increased had they projected in a more oblique or in a point blank direction.

PANATHENAIC PROCESSION

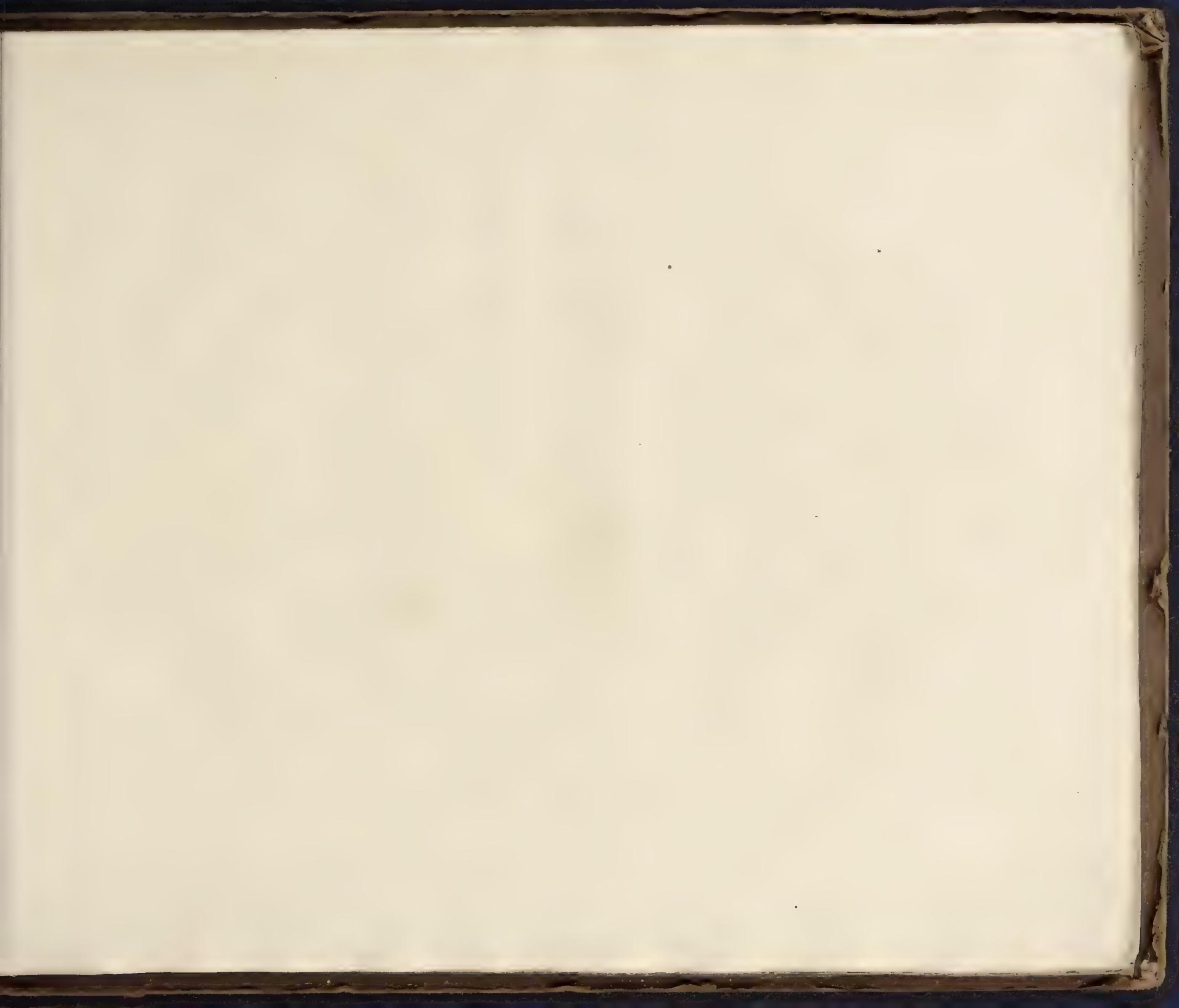
IN BAS RELIEF.

THE exterior surface of the cella of the Parthenon within the colonnade, at the height of the frieze of the pronaos, was embellished by an uninterrupted series of sculpture in bas relief round the Temple. The subject represents the sacred procession which took place at the great Panathenæa, a festival which was celebrated every fifth year at Athens, in honour of Minerva, the patroness of the city.

The major part of those in the British Museum consist of the original compositions in marble; the rest (fifteen in number) are casts in plaster of Paris, the originals having been left at Athens by Lord Elgin, in consequence of the impracticability of removing them without destroying a considerable portion of the building to which they belonged. It is manifest, from the appearance of these casts, that the originals are less mutilated than most of those which were brought to this country, and it is to be hoped that some measures will be adopted to procure them, as they would form an invaluable addition to the present collection.

The remains of these bas reliefs are composed principally of equestrian groups of Grecian youths moving in procession. There are also several chariots besides groups of cattle for sacrifice; whilst some of the slabs are supposed to represent an assemblage of divinities and heroes.

In contemplating these equestrian groups, the spectator is at a loss whether most to admire the sprightly and vigorous action of the horses, or the skill, ease, and grace of the riders.



1723

1747



Rich'd Lawrence del & sculpsit

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*"Fræna Pelethonii Lapithæ gyrosque dedere
Impositi dorso, atque equitem docuere sub armis
Insultare solo, et gressus glomerare superbos."*

In the distribution of the limbs of the horses the artist has shewn the closest attention to the various actions of which the animal is capable. In the pace of the gallop, as represented in these groups, the hind legs are very properly brought under the body at the same moment when the fore legs are thrown forwards; the common mode of expressing that action with modern artists being by an equal extension of the fore legs forwards, and the hind legs backwards at the same time. This position, however, is utterly false, and in direct opposition to the evidence of nature. The horses, in these compositions, like all those bred in hot climates, are small, and it is probable that their models were taken from the Arabian horse, as all the heads exhibit that straight line in the nose which is peculiar to those of that country. The custom of cutting the mane close to the neck as is here exemplified, and which in England is called "hogging," was adopted by the Greeks probably for the purpose of giving the animal a martial appearance, by its similarity to the erect bristles on the top of their helmets.

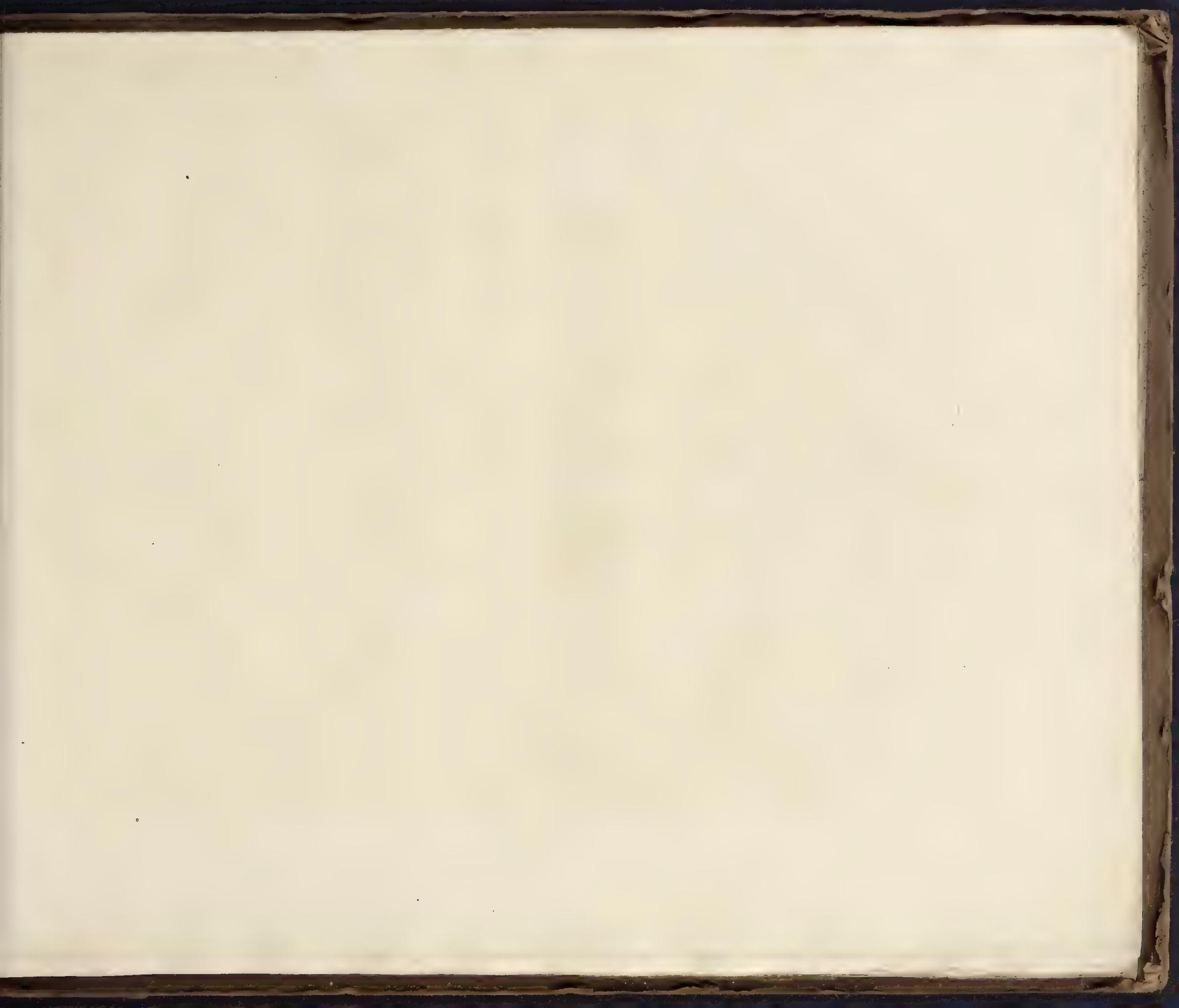
Plate 23. No. 17.

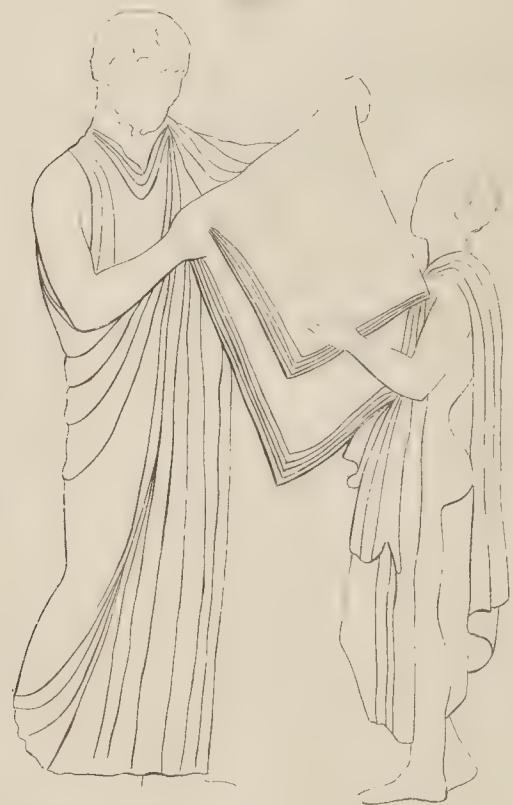
REPRESENTS a conversation group, and, according to the Synopsis of the British Museum, the figures are Castor and Pollux,* Ceres and Triptolemus.

* It is very doubtful if these figures were intended to represent Castor and Pollux; one of them shewing the signs of a more advanced age by the character of the body and limbs, circumstances of course inapplicable to the exemplification of twins.

The figures are all very excellent in the execution, particularly the one at the left extremity of the slab,* which is described as listening to the conversation, accompanied by the very simple and natural action of holding his right knee with his hands, both legs being off the ground, and the body balanced by the seat. There is nothing more beautiful in the whole collection than the composition and finishing of this figure. Its elasticity and pliancy are most admirably described by the protrusion of the shoulders forwards, and the bending of the body. The left leg is peculiarly simple and elegant in its form, bearing that smoothness and regularity of surface which is the characteristic of youth, and which is well opposed by the contrast in the leg of the adjacent figure, which evidently belongs to a man of a more advanced age. The right leg also is equally beautiful, and nothing can exceed the simplicity and grace of the outline, especially at the instep, which is marked by the tendon in front, but with such extreme delicacy as to cause no interruption to the general line. There is, in fact, a magic in the outline of this limb, which is indescribable, and which the smallest variation in any part of it would utterly destroy. The left leg rests upon part of a stick which passes under the outside ankle. The termination of the stick upwards, however, does not appear, and it is a matter of some doubt whether it ever was represented, the surface in that part of the slab being quite smooth and regular. The next figure in this group is a female, but is erroneously described as an old man by Stuart, in his *Antiquities of Athens*.

* In describing the two lateral extremities of the slabs, or of any other object, it is to be understood, that the left signifies that end which is opposite to the right hand of the spectator, and vice versa.





2. Parte del S. en pto



2. otra parte del S. en pto

1725



Richd Lawrence del & sculptor

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1727

Plate 24. No. 18.

REPRESENTS Esculapius and Hygeia, and a figure supposed to be holding the peplos, or sacred web, which was deposited in the Temple. The figure of Hygeia is extremely graceful, and the right arm is particularly beautiful. A serpent rests on the left arm just above the wrist, but the surface is so much corroded that it requires a very close inspection to distinguish it.

Plate 25. No. 27.

THE head of the figure and the head and neck of the horse at the left corner of this group constitute a fragment which was brought to England in the year 1744 and deposited with the Dilettanti Society. It being ascertained to have belonged to this frieze, it was lately presented to the Museum by the Royal Academy (to which institution it had been given by the Society,) and restored to its proper situation in the tablet, and evidently adds greatly to its value and appearance.

It is much smoother and more perfect in the surface than the rest of the group, which may perhaps have arisen from its having been preserved for the last half century from the weather; and this furnishes a strong argument in justification of the removal of the Marbles to this country.

It may perhaps be objected to this observation that there are many other specimens in the collection which, although they were exposed to the atmosphere up to the period of their removal by Lord Elgin, are quite as perfect as the fragment alluded to. The comparison, however, should

be confined to the remainder of *the same slab*, of which the fragment formed a part, and not taken in a general view, because a difference of aspect in regard to their original situation on the exterior of the building, as well as the circumstance of some being displaced and scattered on the ground, and being thereby more liable to be injured, are points which materially affect the question.

Plate 26. No. 28.

Is a very spirited composition. The attitude of the rider on the leading horse is easy and unembarrassed.

Plate 27. No. 29.

THE outline of the horse in the centre of the tablet is in very excellent proportion throughout; and the inside of the off, or right leg and thigh, together with all the parts about the flank, manifest the closest attention to nature. The legs are extremely well defined, preserving a clear distinction between bone, ligament and tendon; and the shape of the hoofs corresponds so perfectly with the rest of the animal, as to give that character which is peculiar to the blood horse of this country, and of which the Arabian was originally the parent stock.

The action of the rider in placing his hand over the upper part of the horse's head is very happily expressed. His intention is to soothe the ardour of his horse, and is precisely the

Pl 20

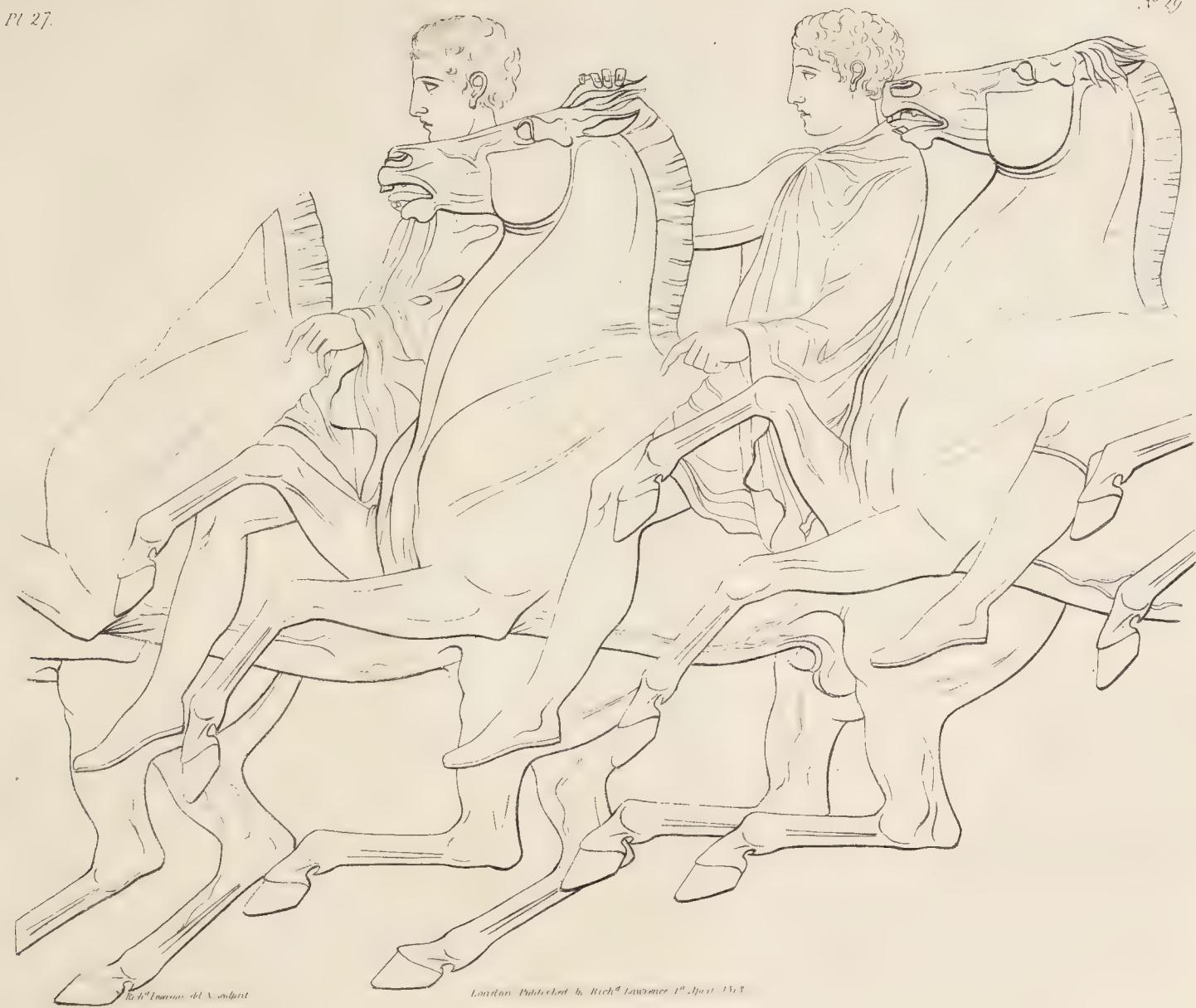
Pl 21



Pl. 20. *Laocoön* del B. sculptor

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Pl. 27.

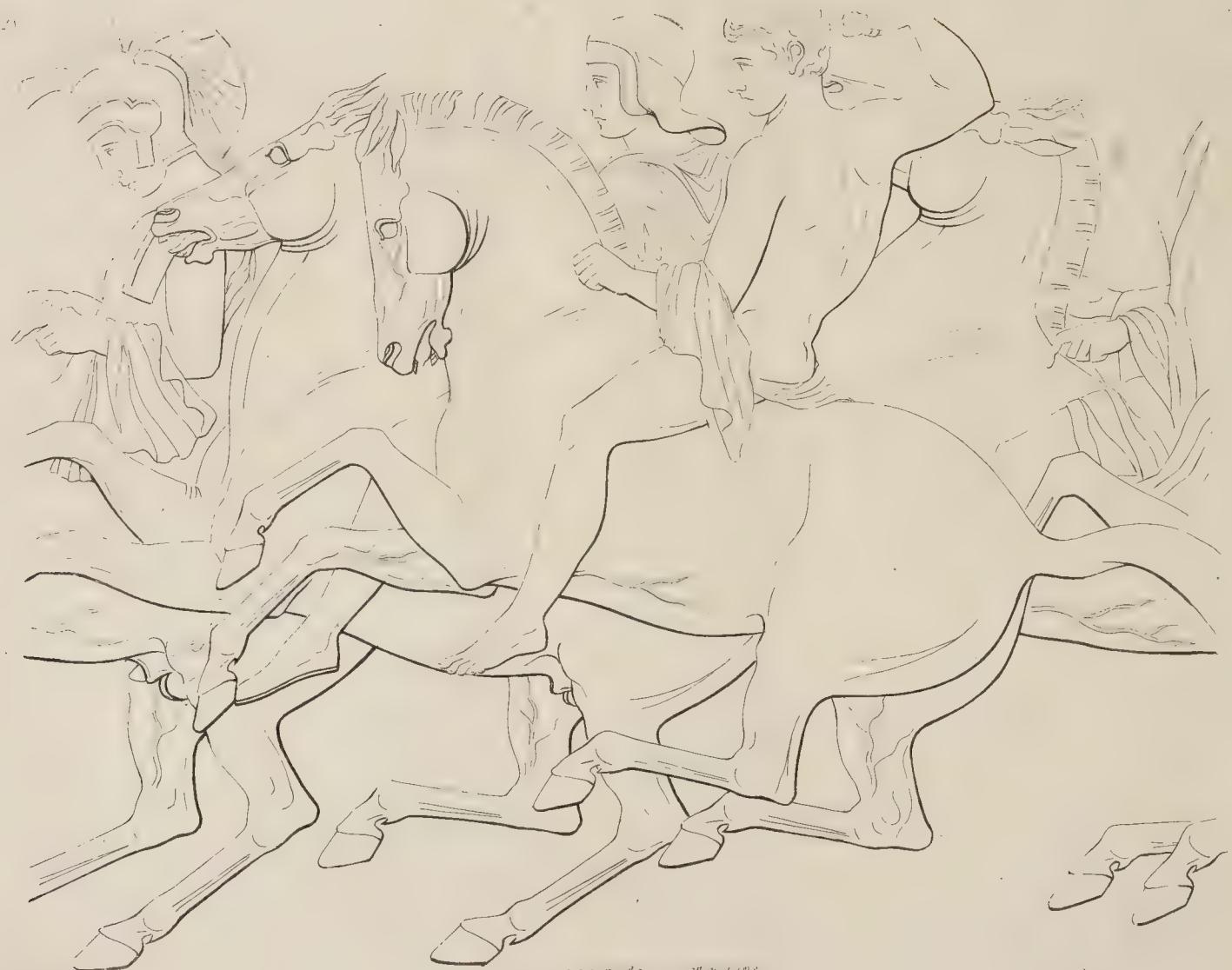


Pl. 29



Pl. 27. *Relief from the N. wall of the*

LONDON. Published by Richard Lawrence 1st April 1817.



Rich^d Lawrence del & sculpsit

London Published by Rich^d Lawrence 1st April 1810

same method which the horse jockeys of the present day practise by taking hold of the horse's ear whilst riding him, to prevent him from rising out of the trot into the gallop.

Plate 28. No. 30.

Is extremely valuable both in composition and execution. The head of the right hand and leading horse is a most masterly production, and is full of fire and impetuosity. It demonstrates the appearance of a hard pulling horse restrained by the bridle, and grinding the bit by the lateral motion of the lower jaw. The position of the head of the left hand horse is very judiciously contrasted with that of the other. The rider is evidently in the act of shortening his reins by drawing them through the left hand with the right, which is in consequence raised and thrown backwards behind his head.

The back of this figure is very beautiful and pliant, and accords well with the motion of the horse. The action of the left hand horse describes what is called in the *manege* the croupade, the horse having sprung from the ground with all his legs in the air, and displaying infinite vigour and elasticity.

With so many exquisite specimens on the same subject it is very difficult to decide to which to give the superiority, but on the whole this may fairly be pronounced to be the best amongst the equestrian groups.

Plate 29. No. 32.

Is a very beautiful and elaborate composition. The figure on the middle horse is of a very elegant form and character, and partakes more of the feminine than any of the rest. It differs also from the rest by carrying a spear in his right hand. The drapery is rich and luxuriant, and the boots perfectly correspond with Homer's description, *ευκλεπτείς Αχαιοί*, the well-booted Greeks. The action of the last horse is of a compound nature, and designates that momentary confusion in the legs which precedes the change from one pace to another. The whole of this group is executed in a very fine and exalted style.

Plate 30. No. 33.

Is an interesting composition, although the whole of it is not of equal merit. There is great ease and pliancy in the attitude of the first figure, and the cloak is so happily disposed as to counterbalance the projection of the opposite hip. The horse is one of the worst in the whole collection. The position of the head is stiff and constrained, and the legs are not placed in the proper centre of gravity.

The other two figures have nothing particular to recommend them. The boy appears to be in the act of adjusting some part of the dress of the figure that stands before him.

1729

1730

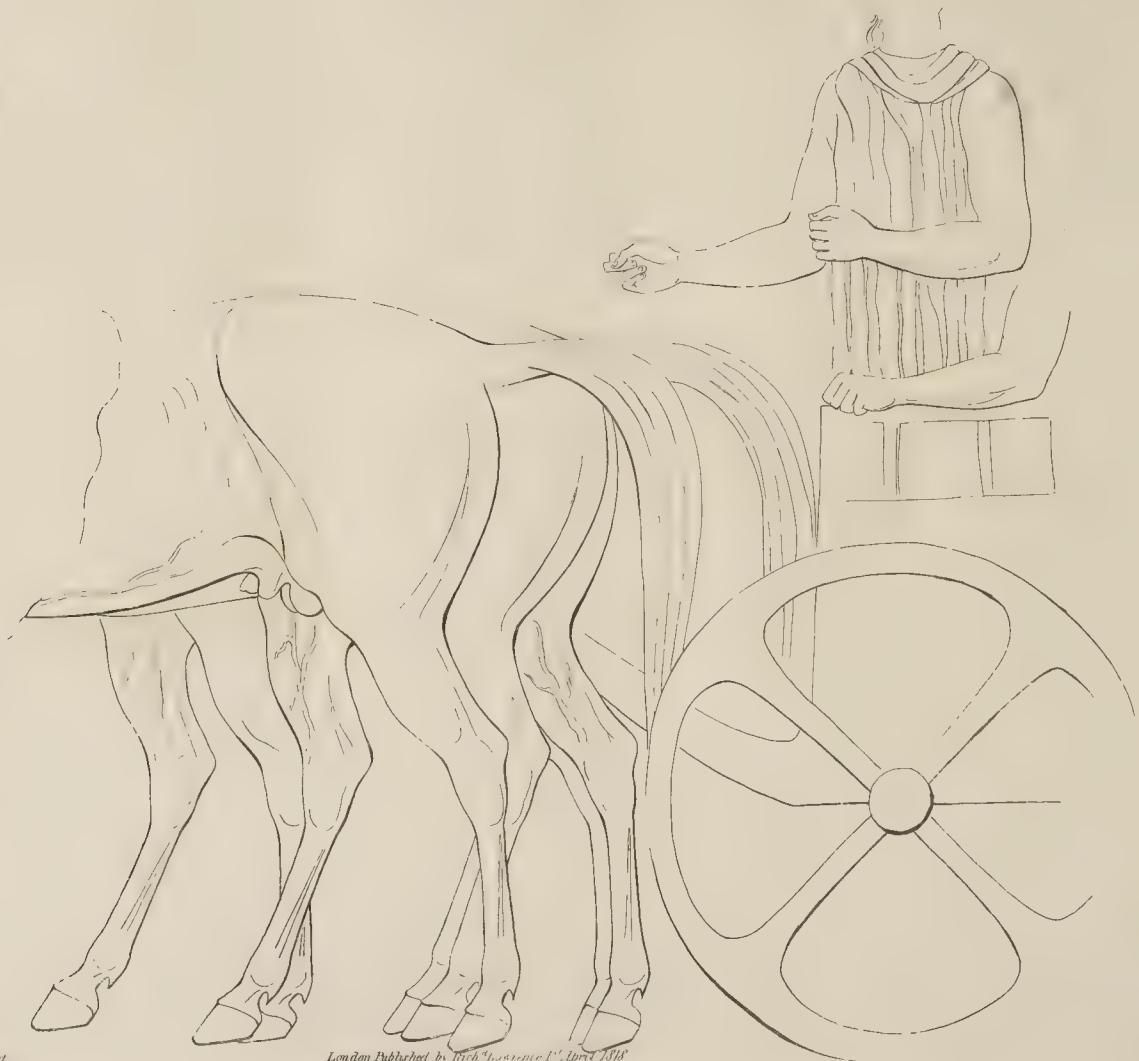


Stich'd Lawrence, del & sculpt'd

London published by Buch 'Lawrence 1st April 1818



1731



Rich. Lawrence del. & engrav'd.

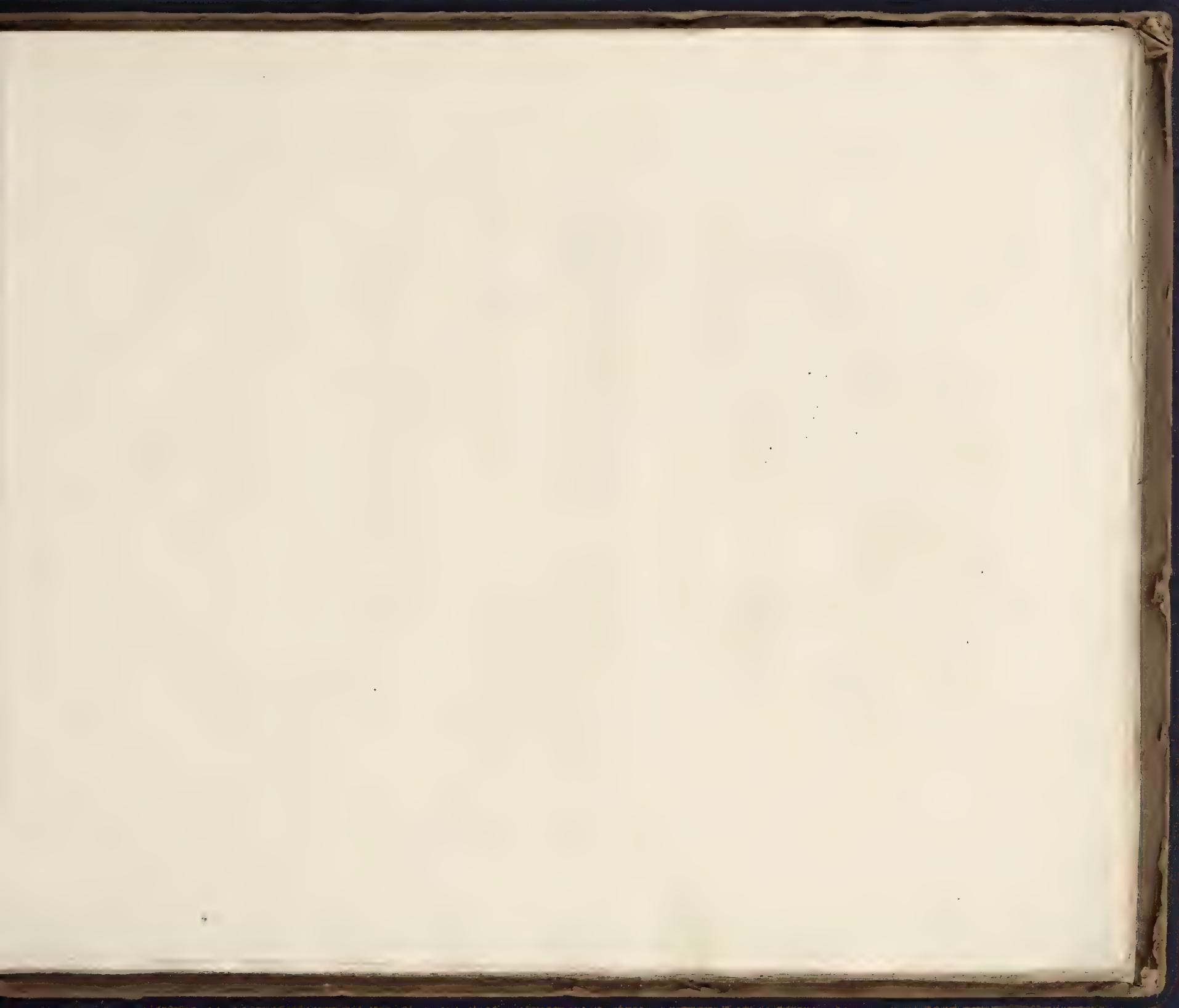
London Published by Rich. Lawrence Esq. April 1808

1732

1732



1733



1733

1734



Arch Lawrence del & sculpt'd

London Published by Arch Lawrence Esq. April 1770

Plates 31 and 32. No. 35.

EXHIBIT a chariot drawn by four horses. This group is distinguished by the very elegant and blood-like form of the horses. The beautiful line of the back and croup, and the arch described by the elevation of the tail, together with the fine sweep of the haunches to the hocks, are all points of that admirable symmetry which is so peculiar to the Arabian horse, and denote very forcibly the skill and ability of the artist.

Two heads belonging to the horses in this group compose a fragment which came into the possession of the Dilettanti Society at the same period as that in No. 27. They are extremely beautiful, and perfectly accord with the elegance of the bodies and limbs. In the duplicate (Plate 32,) the whole is represented as it appeared about 60 years ago, but it was necessary to draw it on a smaller scale in order to adapt it to the size of the present work; the slab, in this tablet as well as in Nos. 32, 33 and 39, being considerably longer than the rest.

Plate 33. No. 39.

IN this group the rider on the leading horse is described as looking backwards, and making some signal to his companion by raising his left hand. A skilful attention to the true principles of horsemanship is evinced in the position of this figure, for although his body is turned and his face is directed backwards, still he preserves his seat by the unaltered position of the legs and thighs, which take the same inclination as if the body was in a straight forward direction.

The flexion is very properly performed by the loins only, but an artist, ignorant of horsemanship, would have thrown out the knee of the leg on the same side to which the body is turned, and would thereby have destroyed that appearance of firmness and composure which is so conspicuous in the seat of this figure.

Plates 34 and 35. No. 41.

THE remains of this group sufficiently shew that it was one of the most admirable in the whole procession. The graceful and dignified attitude of the rider on the middle horse, and the elegant proportion of the body and limbs, are well worthy of the attention of the spectator. The action of the middle horse is remarkably animated, and describes the effect of a momentary check from the bridle called by the French the *demi-arret* or half stop. This is well illustrated by the trifling degree of flexion which remains in the knee of the horse's left leg, and which denotes that the foot is just deposited on the ground and the straightening of the leg not yet completed.

The position of the rider on the leading horse indicates the action of urging his steed, by applying his heel to the flank of the animal. The perpendicular direction of the horse's head is well contrasted with the horizontal line of the other. Plate 35 is the restored duplicate.

Pl 34

1041



Richrd Lawrence del & sculpt

London Published by Richrd Lawrence 1st April 1818



Pl 34

164



17.36

17.37



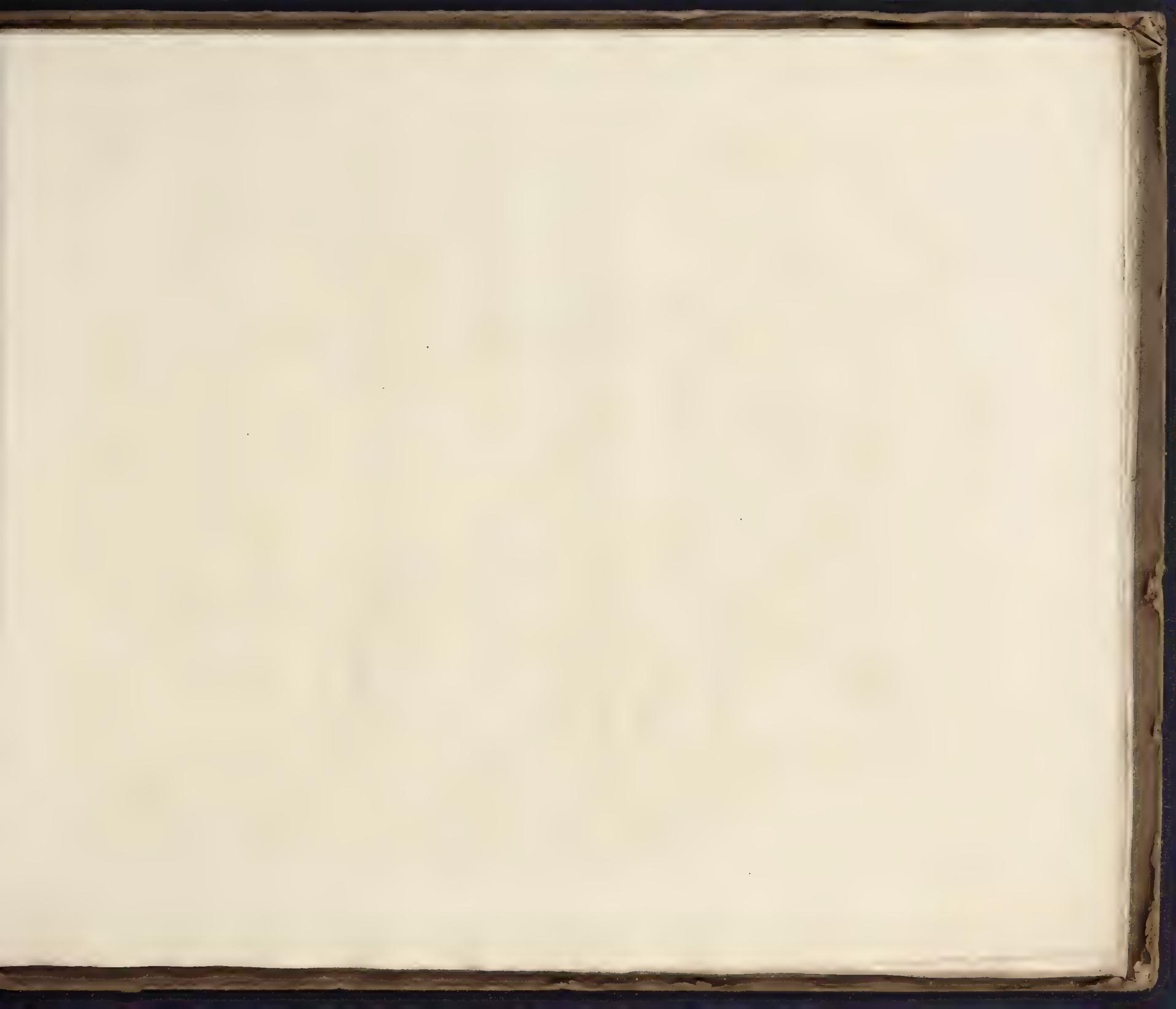
Rich' Lawrence del. & sculpt.

London Published by Rich' Lawrence Esq; April 1775



Richd Lawrence del & sculpt

London Published by Richd Lawrence 1794



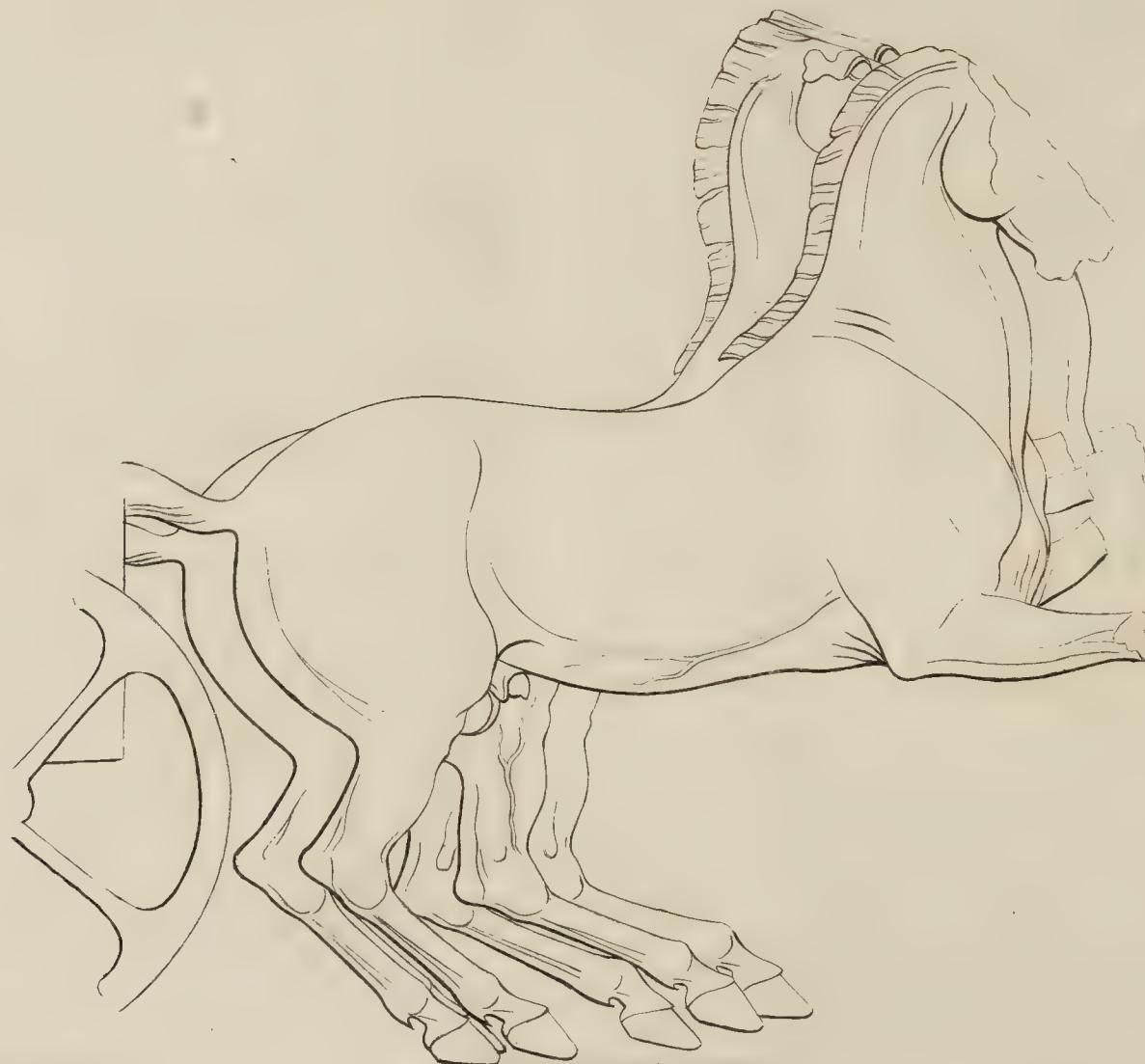
1738

1733

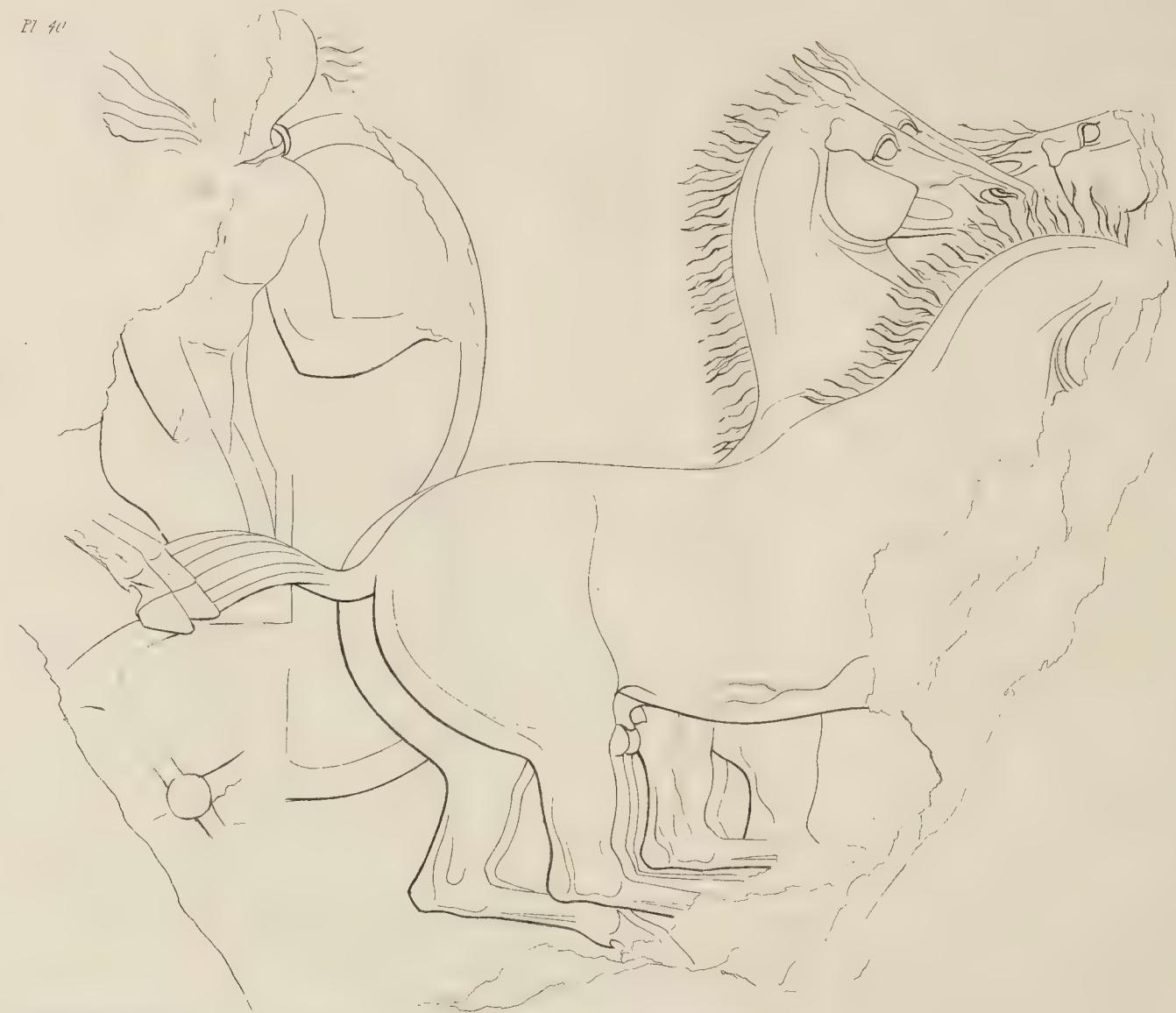


Rich^d Lawrence del & sculptd

London Published by Rich^d Lawrence 1st April 1781



Pl 40



V. 50

London Published by Rich'd Lawrence 1st April 1818

Pl 41



1856

Rich Lawrence del & sculpsit

London Published by Rich Lawrence 1st April 1856

Plates 36 and 37. No. 43.

THE attitude of the leading horse in the action of the slow gallop is very beautiful. The flexion of the haunches, and the position of the right hind leg, just preparing to alight on the ground, for the purpose of receiving the weight of the body in rotation, are very judiciously expressed. The seat of the rider is highly graceful as well as the disposal of the drapery. The last horse is very animated. Plate 37 is the restored duplicate of this subject.

Plates 38 and 39. Nos. 53 and 54.

ARE beautiful specimens, although much mutilated.

Plates 40 and 41. No. 56.

ONE of the chariots in the procession drawn by four horses.* The horses are extremely spirited, and of a very elegant form; the heads also are happily disposed. Plate 41 is the restored duplicate. The tail of one horse only being seen, the haunch of the second horse, at a first view, appears to belong to the first horse, and under that impression has a bad effect, because in that case it would be entirely out of drawing.

* Mr. Visconti erroneously describes some of these chariots as drawn by three horses, the whole of them in the collection being invariably drawn by four.

Plate 42. No. 61.

DESCRIBES one of the victims destined for the sacrifice. There is a very natural expression in the animal, which is raising its head in the act of *lowing*. The horns are out of perspective, but that could not be avoided in bas relief.

Plate 43. No. 76.

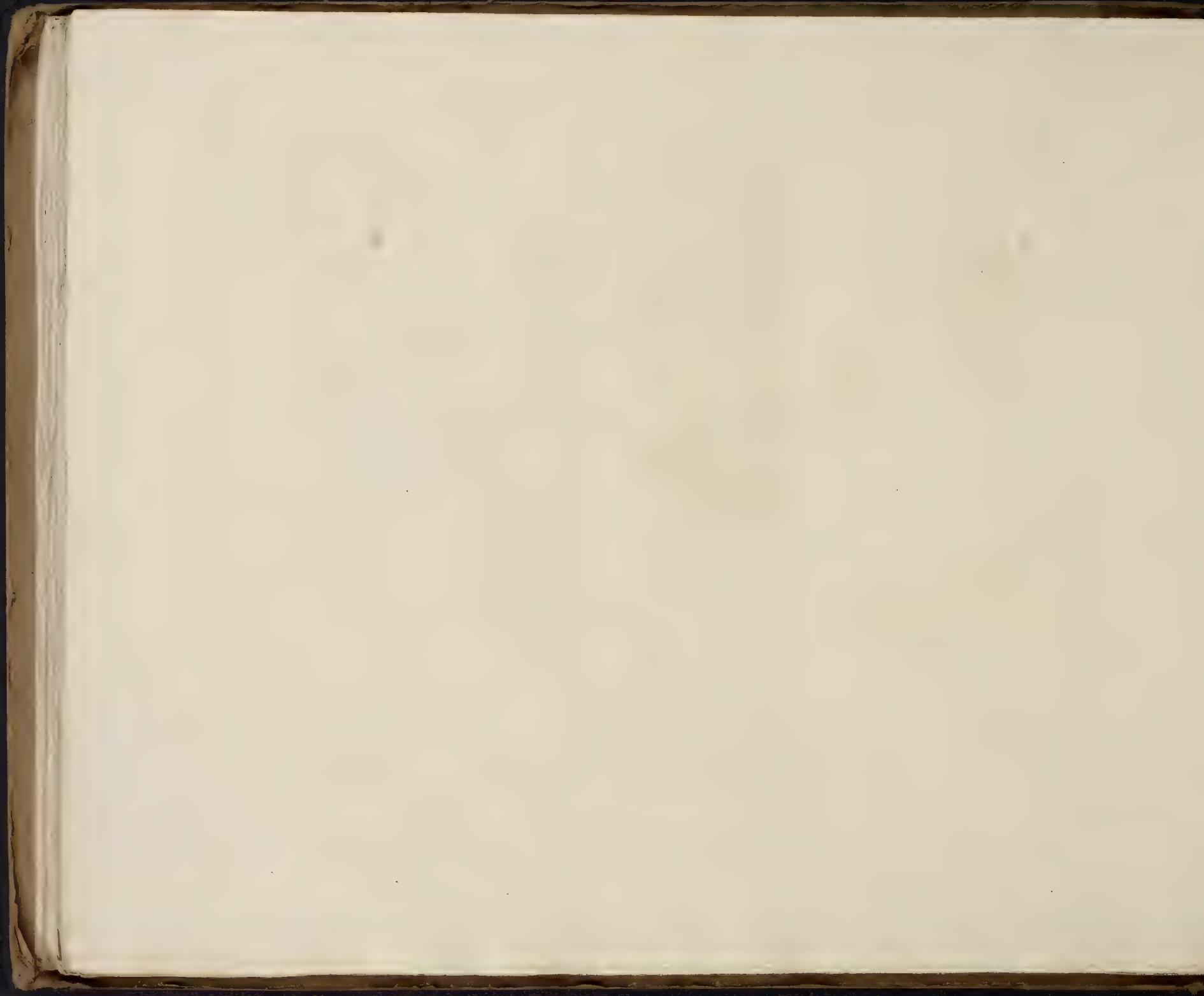
THE attitude of the leading horse is extremely animated, and describes the animal as being thrown suddenly on his haunches. The figure on the second horse wears a particular cap, indicative, perhaps, of some distinction in rank.

Plate 44. No. 78.

THE attitude of the horseman in this group is the finest illustration of a just and elegant seat on horseback in the whole collection. The concavity of the loins, the projection of the head forwards to balance the obliquity of the body, the closeness of the elbows to the hips, and the dropping the hands on the withers to prevent the horse from throwing up his nose too high, all conspire to give truth and ease to the upper part of the figure. Nor is the lower part less correct, as is manifest by the thigh and leg being kept flat to the horse's sides, so as to apply as broad a surface as possible, and thereby increase the number of points of contact between the two surfaces. The degree of







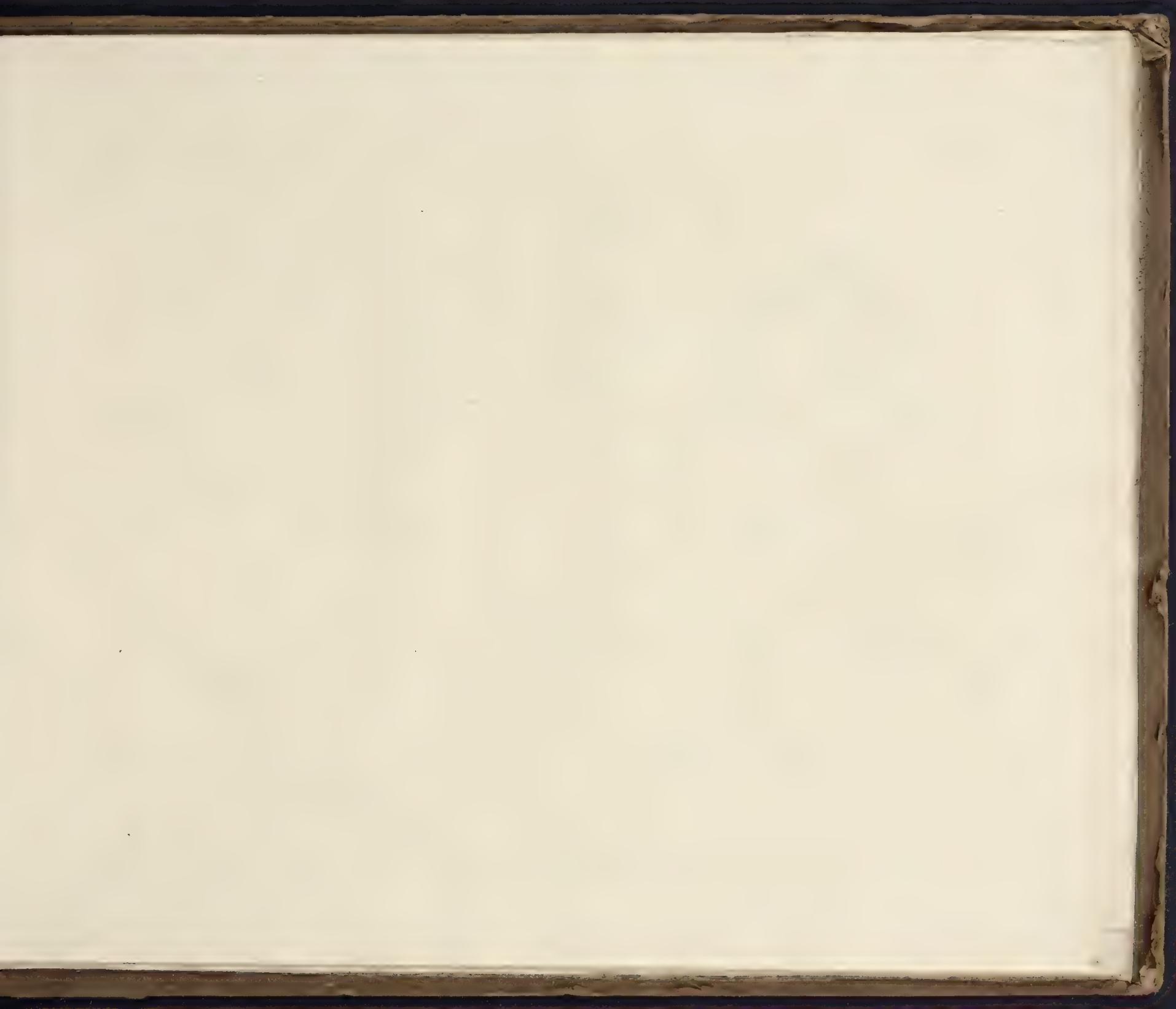
1744



Richrd Lawrence del & sculpsit

London Published by Richrd Lawrence, 1st April 1828

1758







Rockingham *del C. sculptor*

London Published by Hugh Lawrence 12 April 1818



197

198



La vence del & sculpt

London Drawn by R. & W. B. 1811

flexion in the knee is well regulated, so as to render the leg neither too stiff nor too pendulous. This figure, in consequence of its being more splendidly attired than the rest, has been supposed to have been intended for Alcibiades, but this of course is mere conjecture. The standing figure, in the attitude of adjusting his sandal, is very naturally expressed.

Plate 45. No. 79.

CONVEYS a very striking representation of speed in the two horses. The leading one is described with a flowing mane, in which it differs from most of the others in the collection. The attitudes of the riders (particularly the last) are graceful and unembarrassed. The lion's skin floating in the air adds greatly to the expression of speed.

Plate 46. No. 80.

A VERY spirited group, and forms a pleasing variety in the equestrian subjects. The drapery is bold and masterly.

Plate 47. No. 81.

THIS is a very animated and splendid group. The style in which it is executed is extremely free and masterly. The head of the last horse is equal to any in the collection, and is full of ardour and

vigour. The figures are easy and graceful, and the drapery light and elegant. The body of the last figure is short comparatively with the legs, but this was a license taken by the artist, and of which there are other instances amongst these equestrian subjects. The hats give an agreeable finish to the costume.

Plate 48. No. 82.

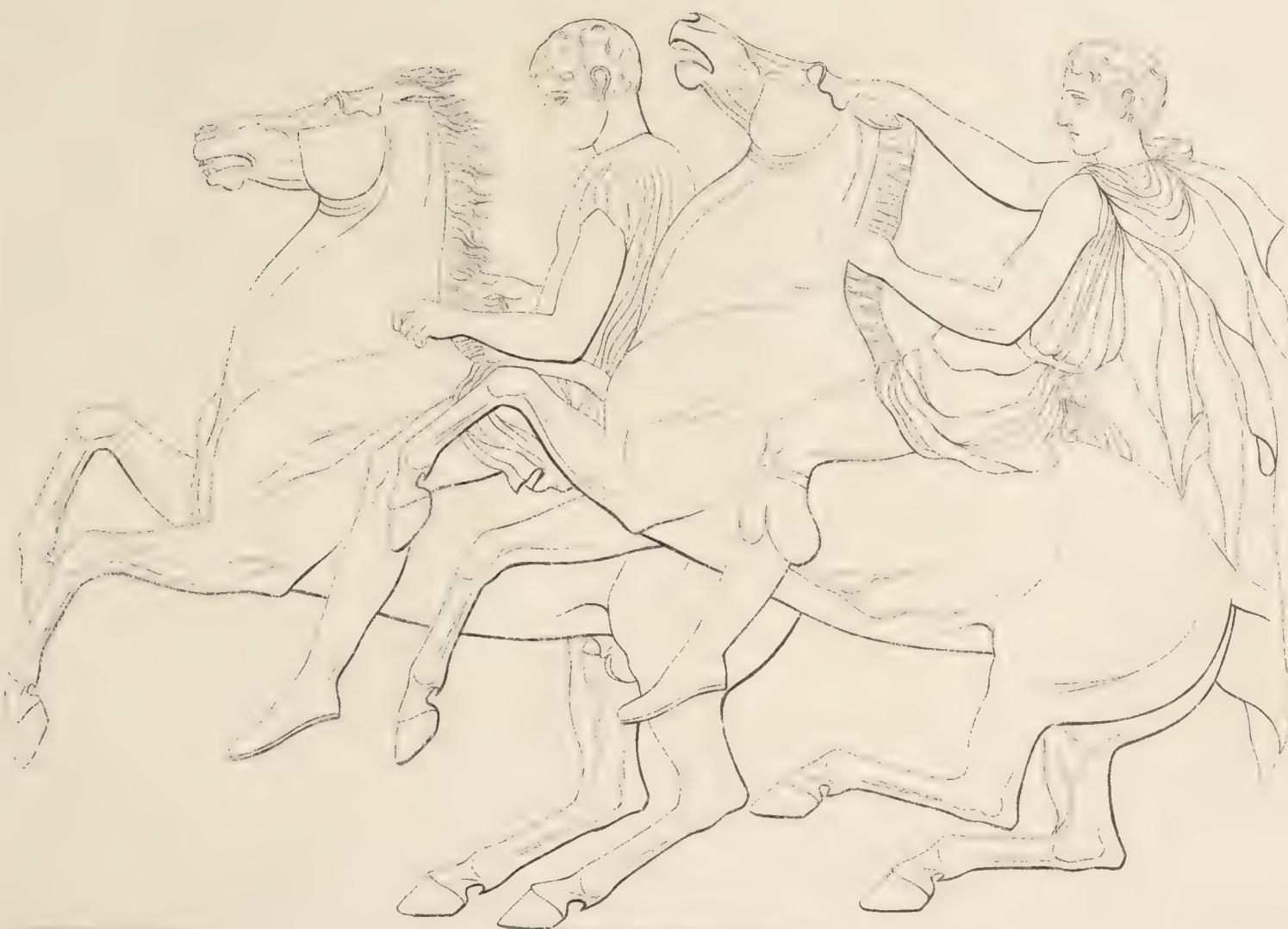
CORRESPONDS with the rest in style and execution. The action of the rider on the last horse is bold and energetic.

Plates 49 and 50. No. 85.

REPRESENT the man in the action of endeavouring to make his horse extend both his fore and hind legs so as to occupy a large space of ground, and for this purpose he touches the back part of the fetlock of the horse's fore-leg with his own foot, whilst at the same time he prevents his body from advancing by restraining him with the bridle. This practice is very common amongst modern horse-dealers.

The attitude of the man is extremely graceful; his hat is slung over his right shoulder, and produces a good effect. Plate 50 is the restored duplicate.

Taken separately and collectively, these equestrian groups are inestimable even solely as examples to modern artists, who, in common with all the painters and sculptors of the last two



1747

1785



J. Lawrence del & sculpt

London Printed by Richd Lawrence 1785

Pl. 50.

N^o 85.



Richd Lawrence del & sculpt

London Published by Richd Lawrence M^{dc}ccxlii

or three centuries, are greatly deficient in placing their figures on horseback. There is one circumstance, however, in these groups which it is necessary to point out to prevent painters and draughtsmen from being led into error, namely, that the thighs of all the men are longer than they would appear if the figure was placed on a round body instead of a flat one, because in that case the width of the horse's body, by separating the knees of the rider to a greater extent, must shorten the appearance of the thigh by throwing it into perspective; but as bas relief does not admit of perspective, the thighs would have seemed too short had they not been represented of their full length. This length, therefore, is admissible in bas relief, but would be very incorrect where light and shade are employed so as to give the breadth and rotundity of the horse's body.

It is also necessary to remark that most of the figures sit lower on the horses' backs than they could possibly do in nature; so that the breech comes considerably below the line of the horse's back, and in consequence of this circumstance the legs and feet exhibit an extraordinary length below the horse's belly. This deviation from the truth is occasioned by the system which the Greek artists seem to have adopted of filling up the tablet as much as they could, and, being desirous at the same time to form the men as large as possible, the figures could not have been brought within the space allotted by the tablet but for this violation of propriety. This lowness of the seat is particularly manifest in Plates 33 and 34. The same desire to fill up the tablet appears in the conversation groups, where the heads of the sitting figures are as high as those that are standing.

There is a very manifest difference in the style and execution of some of these bas reliefs,

as well as the Metopes, when compared with the rest, and also a very evident inferiority, the natural consequence of being executed by different artists. But it is worthy of remark that there is no such difference in the merit of the large figures which occupied the pediments, and which are indeed all equally excellent; whence it may be justly concluded that they were the sole production of one great and masterly hand.

CONCLUSION.

TAKING leave of his readers, the Author cannot offer a more suitable apology for the defects of his work than the following words of Seneca: “ *Multum restat operis, multumque restabit, nec ulli nato post mille secula precludetur occasio aliquid adhuc adjiciendi.* ”

Aware also that his doctrines may be disputed, he begs leave to repeat that he utterly disclaims the intention of giving offence to those whose opinions may happen not to coincide with his own.

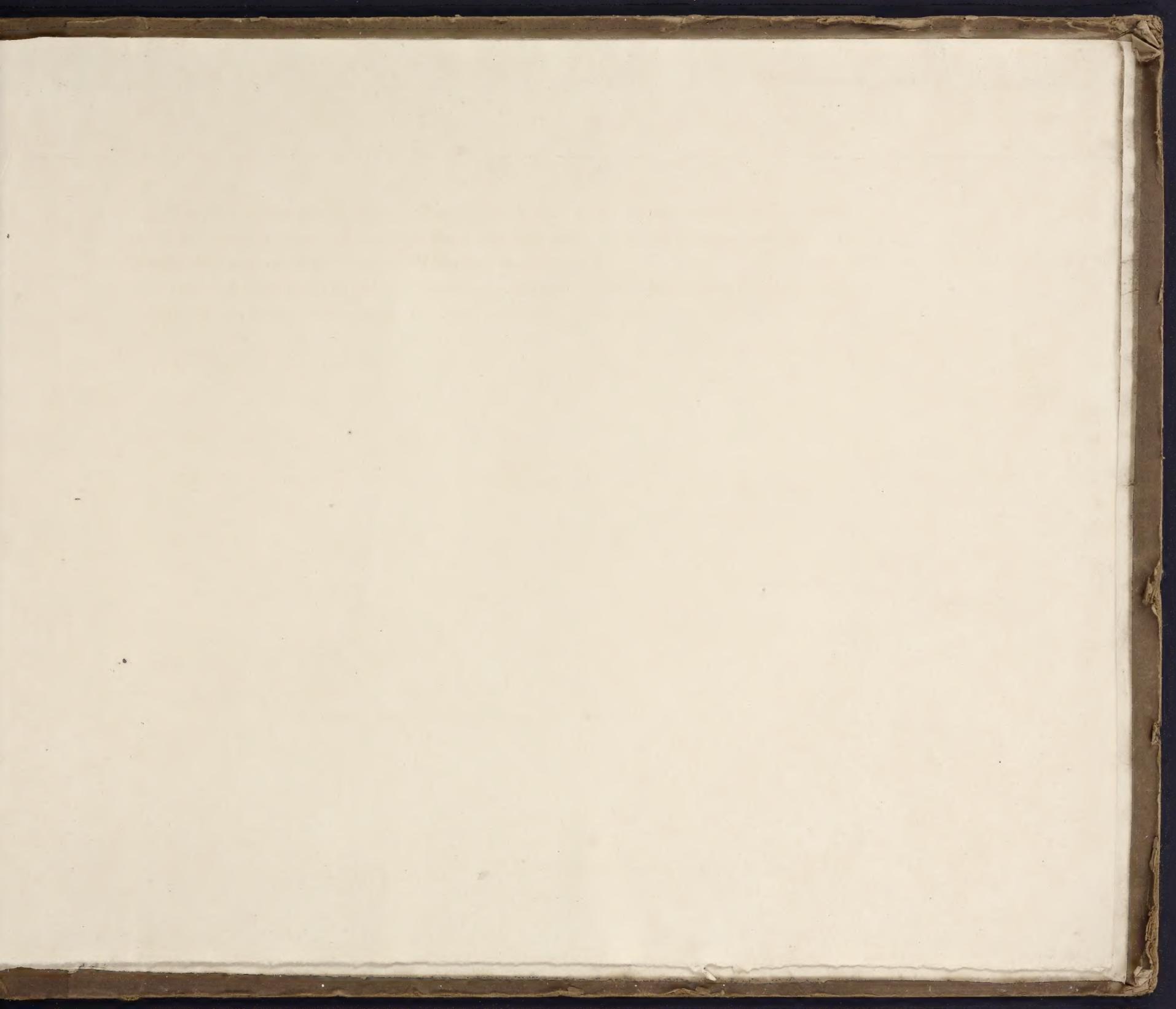
Controversial discussion, when conducted with candour and decorum, is the best spring to mental exertion, and materially assists the developement of truth and knowledge, by exciting enquiry into the various systems that have arisen both in past and present times.

To the adverse effects of self delusion in the pursuit of art he is unfortunately no stranger; but he who can detect his own errors, and is awake to his own imperfections, is endowed with a faculty rare indeed.

Too often are the barriers of the judgment overwhelmed by the torrent of enthusiasm, and when the unchastened fantasies of the brain have been cast upon the world, reflection rushes on the imagination, and unveils imbecility when it cannot be recalled.

How just, alas! is the adage that “art is long, life short.” Time leads to the Temple of Truth with tardy wing, and, ere we pass the threshold, consigns us to the grave.

THE END.





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